THE SACRED-SECULAR DIVIDE
AND ITS EFFECT ON THE MISSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE:
A HONDURAN CASE STUDY

A THESIS-PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF

GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

DOUGLAS ALAN LIVINGSTON

MAY 2022

Copyright © 2022 by Douglas Alan Livingston. All Rights Reserved.

To Gloria, the love of my life

Thank you for loving God and me with your whole heart

To Dad and Mom, Neil and Mary Louise Livingston

Who in so many ways modeled wholistic mission

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS vii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS viii

ABBREVIATIONS x

ABSTRACT xi

Chapter

1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING 1

Introduction 1

The Importance of the Sacred-Secular Divide for God's People 2

The Evidence of the Sacred-Secular Divide in the Church and Society 3

The Effects of the Sacred-Secular Divide on the Mission of God's People 16

Research Focus and Setting 21

2. THE ROOTS OF THE SACRED-SECULAR DIVIDE 27

Influences from Western History 28

Influences from the Mayan World 41

Influences from the Spanish Conquest 45

Influences from Protestant Evangelicalism 53

A Summary of the Origins of the Sacred-Secular Divide 57

3. A BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE

TO THE SACRED-SECULAR DIVIDE 59

Wholism in the Mega-Narrative 60

Wholism and the Dualisms of Scripture 73

Wholism and a Life of Discipleship 83

Conclusion 96

4. LITERATURE REVIEW 100

Understanding SSD 100

The Roots of SSD 106

A Theological Response to SSD 116

Conclusion 124

5. PROJECT DESIGN AND RESULTS 126

Survey Instrument Development 126

Survey Instrument Application 128

Survey Responses 131

Survey Conclusions 176

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 178

General Conclusions 178

Recommendations for the Local Church 180

Recommendations for Theological Institutions 182

Recommendations for Missions Entities 185

Implementation in Avant Ministries 187

Appendix

A. FIELD SURVEY 190

B. THE DUALISM SCORE AND DUALISM INDEX CALCULATIONS 205

C. WHY IGLESIA BETEL HAS A SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER DUALISM INDEX SCORE 211

BIBLIOGRAPHY 219

VITA 226

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

1. Pearcey's View of Two Stories of Truth 40
2. Contrasting Views of Reality 97
3. A View of Structure and Direction 98

Tables

1. Adult Population of Churches and Response Rate 131
2. Parents' Education Level 136
3. Ranking of Activities from Most Secular to Most Spiritual 142
4. Ranking of Professions from Most Secular to Most Spiritual 144
5. Ranking of Places from Most Secular to Most Spiritual 136
6. Evangelism Activities from Most Important to Least Important 148
7. Ranking of Professionals as Servants of God from Least Servant to Most Servant 150
8. Ranking of Activities from Least Ministry to Most Ministry 153
9. Dualism Score Conversion to Dualism Index 155
10. Dualism Index for All Participants 156

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During this writing process I have been deeply aware of my need of God's guidance, provision, strength, wisdom, and grace. He has supplied all my needs and more.

My wife, Gloria, has been a constant encourager, has pushed me when needed, discussed my ideas to help me clarify them, read and critiqued my drafts, patiently encouraged me to write, even on days off when we could have been doing things together. She believed in me and in the significance of this research for the mission of God's people. You light up my life.

Dr. William Taylor has been my mentor since I was a young adult, my professor, my friend, my advisor, and my example of godly faithfulness. For the past almost forty years he has pushed me to reflect, to expand my horizons, to never stop learning and growing deeper, wider, further. And he has been my thesis-project supervisor. Thank you for your investment in me and for the hours you have given to inject your wisdom, insight, keen eye and perspective into this project and into my life. You are a sage.

The help of the fourteen pastors in Honduras along with the members of their churches was indispensable in carrying out this project. My prayer is that you will be recompensed by learning from the gleanings of this project. You are appreciated.

A special thanks goes to Dr. Enrique Martinez and his wife, Norma, for the many enriching conversations about integral mission over the years, for the privilege of serving together, and for their example of living wholistically on mission in the midst of life's challenges. You don't just talk it; you live it.

I also want to thank my colleagues at Avant Ministries who have graciously allowed me to invest time in this project, sometimes taking on tasks that should have fallen to me so that I

could accomplish this milestone. Scott Yingling and David Ruiz have felt it most and have been essential in helping me reflect on issues related to the Church on mission. It is a joy to serve with you. Scott Holbrook, president of Avant, has been gracious and generous in continuing to support my studies after the merger of Camino Global with Avant in 2019. You are generous.

Thank you to all at Gordon-Conwell D.Min. office who have guided and encouraged this process. You are always quick to answer questions and provide guidance. Thank you for your flexibility. You are servants.

Finally, I want to thank our adult children, Victor Alan and Mary Andrea, for your constant love and encouragement and for all that you have taught us about life since you came into ours. May you know the joy of walking deeply with Him who gives abundant life. You are deeply loved.

ABBREVIATIONS

ASIECAH	*Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas de Honduras*
CAM	Central American Mission
DI	dualism index
DS	dualism score
FR	frequency ratio
ICETE	International Council for Evangelical Theological Education
ISBE	International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
KNH	Kindernothilfe
LCS	Likert conversion scale
MAYA	Mission to Albania and Beyond
N	neutrals
PRODIM-Betel	Program of Wholistic Childhood Development
SSD	sacred-secular divide
WGU	World's Gospel Union

ABSTRACT

The sacred-secular divide in the worldview of evangelicals in Latin America has been scarcely addressed or researched. The purpose of this thesis-project is to prove that this dichotomy does exist. Believers from fourteen churches from one denomination in three cities in Honduras responded to a questionnaire to explore this reality and how it affects their involvement in mission of the Church.

After delving into an understanding of this dualism with its historical and cultural roots, a biblical theology of wholism presents an answer to this flaw. Field research proved the thesis and uncovered specific areas that need to be addressed.

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

The sacred-secular divide (referred to hereafter as SSD) is a dualistic worldview that has beleaguered the Church of Jesus Christ since its inception and even today emerges in manifold forms in diverse segments of the Church globally. Simply put, it divides the world into two basic categories: some of life is seen as "sacred" while other parts are "secular." The "sacred" is seen as more important to God and affecting man's relationship to Him while the part of life deemed "secular" is seen as inferior, unimportant, or of less value to God. Paul Stevens and Clive Lim explain it this way:

> That division between secular and sacred can be described as a dualism, a division that has plagued the church for centuries. Reading the newspaper is secular; reading the Bible is sacred. Being in business is secular; being on a church committee is sacred. Eating a meal is secular; receiving the Lord's Supper is sacred. Building a house is secular; building a church is sacred.[1]

The activities or areas that are considered secular or sacred for a person with this dualism are sometimes ambiguous and often vary depending on cultural as well as theological and historical influences. Nonetheless, whatever the particular manifestations are in any given context, this dualistic perception of life is what characterizes this perspective. In order to understand the problem and the focus of this thesis-project, this chapter will explore the importance of SSD for God's people, examine the evidence of its existence, and define its broad effects on the mission of the Church. With that understanding of the problem, a description of the

1. Clive Lim and Paul Stephens, *Money Matters: Faith, Life, and Wealth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021), 42-43.

setting of the research, churches in three urban centers in Honduras, will be portrayed. Finally, the thesis of this study and the research question will be clarified.

The Importance of the Sacred-Secular Divide for God's People

The concern for this malady in the Church began as I wrestled with it in my own mind in my youth and as I have confronted it continuously in ministry in several countries. I had the privilege of growing up in Honduras, where my parents served as missionaries, and I pastored there for seven years right after seminary. During those early years of ministry, I had the opportunity to serve on a national level both in the denomination of the *Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas Centroamericanas de Honduras* as well as interdenominationally and regionally in the area of missions and youth. I was also involved for about ten years in teaching Bible, theology, missions, and ministry classes to leaders from around the country. My wife and I were then sent by our church in Honduras as church planting missionaries to Albania. These decades of living, participating, leading, and interacting in Honduras and beyond have produced a growing concern for the Church, particularly as I have become increasingly aware of the dualistic worldview present, not just in the culture in general, but more significantly in believers. God has burdened me with a deep-rooted disquiet because of the multiple ways in which a bifurcated worldview can devalue believers, warp their view of God, truncate service for Him, and critically stifle the impact of any church on mission.

Mark Greene, the executive director of The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, expresses this same concern in *The Great Divide*:

> I am convinced that we are missing something, that the message of the Gospel is being partially eclipsed and that this has led to a narrower, less radical, less adventurous understanding of what it means to follow Jesus than the Bible's compelling picture. I am also convinced . . . that this is not just a critical concern in the West, where the Church is

> in decline, but a vital issue for the Church globally, even where the number of people becoming Christians continues to grow. Indeed, as many non-Western commentators have pointed out, there is a crying need for a deepening of discipleship. There is also an urgent need to avoid the mistakes of the Western church. The challenge is the sacred secular divide. And it is the malignant foe of fruitful mission and joyful Christian living. There is a better way.[2]

This bifurcation of life is, by its very nature, an all-encompassing view of reality, the lens through which a person looks at all of life and comprehends their place in it, both as an individual and as part of a community. As such, it most certainly shapes the basic understanding of life and work. The dualistic perspective is manifest in varying degrees and in a diversity of manners as it is lived out by the people of God. This research project is particularly focused on the acute seriousness of these manifestations in that they undermine the mission of the Church at its root. A binary vision robs Christ followers of their identity, purpose, and pleasure as God's people in the world and undercuts their potential for impact for His Kingdom in the world.

The Evidence of the Sacred-Secular Divide in the Church and Society

In the contemporary evangelical Church globally, there are multiple manifestations of a bifurcated worldview that include at least elements of the sacred-secular divide. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be primarily on expressions of this dualism that are observed in evangelical churches in Central America, specifically, those of the *Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas Centroamericanas de Honduras* where this research project was carried out. While most of these same observations could be made as well in other latitudes and longitudes, they are specifically pertinent to the research context. A final limiting factor in selecting this evidence is the extent of its affect the mission of God's people.

2. Mark Greene, *The Great Divide* (London, UK: London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, 2010), 5.

Therefore, we will explore how SSD is manifest in nine aspects of a believer's worldview in their perception of life, the rule of God, the Church, the call to ministry, work, evangelism, ethics, economics and finances, and faith and science. Each of these will be examined as to the manner in which they skew the perception of and participation in the mission of the Church. In some cases, a biblical perspective that is in dissonance with that particular manifestation will be briefly explored, although these seed concepts will be developed more fully in chapter 3. Each of these views is a skewed construct of biblical truth. Dualism has taken God's perspective and design and twisted it with often devastating consequences.

Life

At its core the sacred-secular dichotomy is a worldview. What a person thinks is real is what determines how they live. Therefore, it taints all of life. Specifically, this worldview sees life as divided. Part of life is sacred, but most of it is secular. This worldview deems only "religious" activities, places, professions, and implements as sacred. The rest of life is seen as secular. Therefore, there is a glaring absence of an overarching, integral purpose in life; it is partitioned into two parts. Darrow Miller articulates it well:

> Without a transcendent framework that speaks to all areas of life, our life purpose is truncated to dying to go to heaven. We've lost the larger framework in which it is understood that our lives and work are in relationship—in relationship to God through worship, to others through service, and to creation through stewardship. Our lives and work have largely been separated from their mission, and this ultimately stems from a loss of the biblical worldview. When we've succumbed to dualistic thinking, the majority of each of our lives—the supposedly "secular" part—is informed by the impoverishing worldviews of our culture, by elements of the materialism and animism . . . rather than by the truth witnessed to in Scripture.[3]

3. Darrow Miller, *LifeWork: A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2009), chap. 1, Kindle.

One of the challenges of a worldview is that it is deep within a person and is so ubiquitous that it colors everything we see, do and think about. Greene shares the gravity of this reality as well as its prevalence:

> SSD is the pervasive belief . . . that some segments of our life are really important to God—prayer, church services, church-based activities –but that others aren't—work, school, university, sport, the arts, music, rest, sleep, hobbies. SSD is like a virus. It pervades the church and pretty much everyone I know has had it and is a carrier. I've had it. And I struggle against it.[4]

This dualism deforms the relationship of believers to society and causes frustration to professionals. Nancy Pearcy in her award-winning book *Total Truth* articulates this impact:

> But no Christian, in any profession, can be happy when torn in two contrary directions. We all long for our work to count for something more than paying bills or impressing our colleagues . . . The dichotomies we've been talking about—the secular/sacred and public/private—are not merely abstractions. They have a profoundly personal impact. When the public sphere is cordoned off as a religion free zone, our lives become splintered and fragmented. Work and public life are stripped of spiritual significance, while the spiritual truths that give our lives the deepest meaning are demoted to leisure activities, suitable only for our time off. The gospel in hedged in, robbed of its power to "leaven" the whole of life.[5]

As with any worldview, this dualism informs our values, beliefs, actions, attitudes, reactions, identity, motivations, habits, and decisions. It is all encompassing. Therefore, by definition this dichotomy is a greater issue than just the missional concerns being addressed in this thesis-project. Nonetheless, when the mission of God's people is understood to include all of life, it is inseparable from this and any other perspective of reality. Precisely because this bifurcation of life is a worldview, it inevitably acutely influences how believers see themselves in relation to God and the world. Our worldview shapes our missiology. More specifically, this divide shapes missiology, or more precisely, distorts it.

4, Greene, *The Great Divide*, 10.

5. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 66.

The Rule of God

Even though the vast majority of Christians would affirm that Jesus is Lord, those with SSD would not really perceive Him as attentive to the "secular" parts of their lives. They view Him primarily as Lord of the "sacred," that is, of the Church and its activities, but not necessarily of the rest of life, at least not to the same degree. They do not comprehend that He has in His Word foundational principles that would radically shift their approach to life and work or what it might mean for Him to fully control these areas. Often local churches have negligible biblical teaching on key spheres of life that are not considered sacred. So, although all would affirm that He is Lord of all, the consideration and focus given by churches with this dichotomy to many life issues considered "secular" are often negligible or non-existent.

Moreover, the eschatology of some believers causes them to focus almost exclusively on the future Kingdom of God and give little importance to how Christ reigns today and the influence of His people as a kingdom of priests on the world in which He has placed them. It is plausible, however, that it is not the eschatology as such that is the problem. It could be an already present dualistic worldview that skews the understanding and application of this theological position more than a fault of the theology as such. The emphasis in many churches is largely on verbally proclaiming the Gospel to save people for the future Kingdom. Proclamation, of course, is an essential part of mission. However, those of this theological persuasion often give only slight attention to how Christ as Lord desires to affect all sectors of society today through His people. The world is seen as secular, on a course for destruction, and of little interest to God except to save souls out of it for an eternal, future Kingdom. Therefore, the influence of the Church on society as salt and light is minimized. Good works are not necessarily seen as an integral part of communicating the Good News. Miller explains the problem:

> The second trend that breeds passivity in the church is the insidious dualism that we traced in Christian thought from its ancient beginnings. . . . In reality, when Christians concern themselves only with narrowly defined "spiritual" concerns, they are unconsciously denying the importance and reality of Christ's teaching about this present world and life, his physical resurrection, and many of his teachings and miracles. Jesus healed the sick and fed the hungry. Rather than following Jesus, Christians influenced by evangelical Gnosticism often become utterly passive. Dualistic thinking keeps them from putting flesh on their faith in their everyday lives, making their faith private and ineffective, as if it has nothing to offer this world and no power or relevance in the present.[6]

The Church

A common misconception of the Church from the perspective of SSD is that the Church is a place, not a people. It is common in Latin America to refer to the building where the Church meets together as *el templo* (the temple). This conjures up Old Testament images of a place where God is more present than in other places. In the Old Testament the temple was the location of the Holy of Holies, God's special dwelling place in the midst of His people. So, the "temple," or building where the Church meets, is seen as a particularly holy place and the center of God's activity in the community. However, in the New Testament, the term "temple" refers to the physical body of believers as temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19, 20) and to the people of God, the body of Christ (1 Cor 3:16, 17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21, 22). The Church is not a physical building.

Through the eyes of dualism, the church edifice is a holier place than is the home, the office, the workshop, the market, the stadium, the classroom, the park or any other place for that matter. It is especially set aside, more consecrated and somehow has more of God's presence. It is sacred; everywhere else is, to one degree or another, secular. To be sure, some places are

6. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 4, Kindle.

considered less secular. For example, a home or a building occupied by a Christian school or ministry might be less secular than a gym or a mechanic shop.

The obstacles for biblical mission in this way of thinking are several. First, it tends to reduce the space where one can truly encounter God to the building where the Church meets. Secondly, it encourages the local church to be building-centered and program-centered and, thus, centripetal in approach to mission. Believers are encouraged to bring people to the especially sacred space to hear the Gospel instead of sharing Christ as they go through life. Thirdly, it devalues the presence of God everywhere else and in the life of the Spirit-filled believer. It ignores the sacredness of all spaces dedicated to God by those believers present for His purposes. It tends to limit true ministry to a certain space instead of viewing the whole world and all of society as God's workshop where He with His people is actively influencing, calling and transforming. Lastly, it can tend to limit the worship of His people to certain times and spaces instead of being a pilgrim Church, worshipping the Creator everywhere they go as continual, living sacrifices.

Calling to Ministry

One of the most devastating effects of the divide on the mission of God's people is limiting His call to ministry to only a few and limiting ministry to certain programs and vocations. Those with this dichotomy see only some believers as "called to ministry." In contrast, according to the New Testament, all believers are *servants of God* (Matt 20:26-28; John 12:26; Col 3:23, 24; 1 Pet 2:16; 4:10). Every believer is called to serve God as a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1, 2). All believers are the light of the world and salt of the earth (Matt 5:13-16). All

believers are ambassador of Christ (2 Cor 5:20) and are called to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19-20). All are called to live in holiness as a kingdom of priests (1 Pet 2:5-9).

When God's call to ministry is understood as only for a chosen few, the majority of believers are relegated to something less. They are only expected to support those who are "called to ministry," particularly pastors and missionaries. Those believers not considered to have been called only participate in ministry when involved in programs of the local church that are initiated by church leadership or have a Bible study at their place of work.

While God does call some to be paid by the church to serve Him, it does not mean that their ministry is more important or that they are somehow more called or more special to God's economy. According to Ephesians 4:11-13, God gave leaders to the Church in order for them to equip the rest of the believers for "the work of the ministry." The work of the ministry belongs to all of God's people. When dualism divides out a select few to be called to ministry, they cripple the majority of the body of Christ and greatly reduce the significance of every believer and their potential to serve in the mission of God on earth. Nonetheless, it must be clarified that some are called by God to lead the body and to work for the Church to care for, nourish, protect and feed the flock of God. In elevating the call of all believers to ministry 24/7, we should not diminish nor devalue the role of those whose work is to serve the Church as their vocation like pastors, missionaries and others whose livelihood comes from the generous giving of God's people.

Work

Scripture has a high view of work, beginning with our Creator working diligently for six days and resting one, giving people a pattern for life. He delighted in the work of His hands and declared it "very good." Before sin entered the picture, Adam and Eve were given the job of

administering the Garden of Eden, naming the animals and exercising dominion over creation (Gen 1 and 2). The Creator is the God who works. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are continually at work on behalf of His Church, His Kingdom and His glory. He invites His followers to be a part of His work in the world, to labor and to serve Him as they serve one another through their professions. In eternity those who are in Christ will reign over the earth with Him (Rev 5:9, 10). Although it is uncertain all that responsibility entails, it is obvious that reigning involves work.

Scripture teaches that work is good; in fact, it is sacred. Men can choose to use it for evil, but it is intrinsically good and is designed for man to serve God and one another through all of the professions, vocations and services of society. He wants them to delight in their work, to be able to look at what they have done and say with Him "it is very good" (Gen 1:31).[7]

Contrary to this high view of work, many with a divided worldview see most work as a "secular" activity or even as an evil to be tolerated. Because it is not seen as service to God, it is often viewed as getting in the way of "real" ministry because it is not a program or activity of the local church or Christian organization. This low view of work is accompanied by a weak theology of vocation or calling. Those with dualism often believe that God only calls pastors, missionaries and other such vocational workers. Some other service professions, such as medical and educational practitioners, are seen as only a level lower in the vocational hierarchy. Businessmen, lawyers and tradesmen are appreciated when needed, but certainly not seen as servants of God for the good of society, while politics is often seen as a field where no believer should tread.

What is needed is a practical biblical theology of work and an understanding of the implications of the lordship of Jesus Christ. As Stephens and Lim explain,

7. All biblical quotes in this thesis-project are from the New English Translation.

> This means one hundred percent of life is dedicated to God and God's purposes including all our seemingly "secular" obligations. It is astonishing that the New Testament never says that first century Christians went to worship services. They were worshipping all week long. They gathered for mutual edification. Why did they refuse to separate life into "silos"? Jesus the carpenter-entrepreneur smashed the old dualism and introduced a way of life in which all was holy, from tilling the soil to trading on the stock exchange, albeit often if not always mixed with sin and deconstruction in this life. There is no "secondary grade of piety" attached to being a businessperson, homemaker, artist, ditch-digger, or banker.[8]

Evangelism

Dualism confines evangelism. It inhibits the gospel from penetrating all of society. Pearcy shares this burden in declaring, "We have to reject the division of life into a sacred realm, limited to things like worship and personal morality, over against a secular realm that includes science, politics, economics, and the rest of the public arena. This dichotomy in our own minds is the greatest barrier to liberating the power of the gospel across the whole of culture today."[9]

Another manner in which this dualism debilitates evangelism in the churches in Central America is by giving greater priority to the spoken and written word of the evangelist with less attention given to communication by example and good deed. This challenge to the missional consciousness and presence of the Church in Latin America is the historical division inherited from the Western Church with its liberal-conservative polarization, particularly in the last century in the United States. As Jim Adams, former rector of the Seminario Teológico Centroamericano in Guatemala, explains,

> The so-called "liberals" promoted an agenda of socio-economic change based on their understanding of the Kingdom of God, while the "conservatives" responded emphasizing the practice of personal piety that left little importance to the participation of the Church in the transformation of culture. The divorce between spirituality and the mission of the

8. Lim and Stephens, *Money Matters*, 46. The authors' reference to " a secondary degree of piety" will be examined in Chapter 3.

9. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 20.

> Church came to Latin America actively in the theology and passively in the spirituality of the North American missionaries.[10]

Both sides of the debate have an element of truth, but as often happens, the reactionary pendulum swings too far in the opposite direction. Both extremes have their pitfalls. Argentine theologian René Padilla observes, "The reduction of mission to social programs that exclude the proclamation of the gospel is as repulsive for the cause of Christ as is the reduction of mission to proclamation that denies the social responsibility as an aspect of the mission. Both extremes are expressions of . . . Western Christianity."[11]

The oft-asked question "what should be given priority, evangelism or social action?" is the wrong question to ask. It misses the point. Biblically speaking, it is a matter of integration of all three indispensable aspects of communicating Christ: walk, works and words. At different moments in the ebb and flow of missional action, various facets will be highlighted, but integration, obedience and sensitivity to the Spirit must be our missional priorities. One mission practitioner addressed the point well: "There is no need to redefine the gospel or the Great Commission. The point of failure is also the point of integration: full expression of the gospel of Christ through lives that demonstrate the love and lordship of Christ. This is the best hope for real transformation."[12]

The tension between these two historical poles has kept many from finding a biblical equilibrium. What is needed is a biblically balanced, ecclesiological missiology, one that encompasses our walk, our works and our words in the making of disciples of Jesus Christ.

---

10. James Adams, "La Formación Espiritual: Fundamento Olvidado de la Misión" (unpublished Lausanne paper, 2010), 3. All translations from this source are mine.

11. René Padilla, cited by James A. Gehman, "Definición de la misión integral e implicaciones para la hermenéutica bíblica," *Kairós* 45 (julio-diciembre 2009): 128. My translation.

12. Gene Wilson, "Holistic Church Planting: Moving Beyond Polemics to Obedience," *Evangelical Mission Quarterly* 50 (July 2014): 342-49.

Ethics

When SSD takes God out of the marketplace, one of the devastating consequences is the negative effect on personal and social ethics. Mennonite Earl Zimmerman speaks out on this divide commenting, "I do not directly refute that way of imagining our world but identify it as a social construction that can be imagined differently. I challenge it to the extent that it is a dualistic system of ordering reality, because that dualism eviscerates religious social ethics by splitting the religious away from the social."[13]

Distorted ethics deeply dishonors the Lord of the mission and garbles the image of Christ before the world. When quotidian conduct of Christians is not examined under a scriptural lens, the light of Christ becomes obscured in culture.

Economics and Finances

Dualism produces an erroneous apperception of economy and finances. This has sweeping societal consequences. Greg Forster of the Oikonomia Network explains the weight of dualism in society:

> This had far-reaching consequences for economic life. The economy was viewed and practiced as a material system, distinct from systems of meaning such as religion, philosophy, art, politics, etc. The economy was concerned with the sustaining and flourishing of humanity's material life; it provided no direct connection to the higher plane in which meaning resides.[14]

When dualism is present, most human functions in the economic system are devalued and striped of any eternal significance. It makes material purposes the only end of economic pursuits

13. Earl Zimmermann, "Beyond Secular and Sacred: An Anabaptist Model for Christian Social Ethics," 50, accessed March 12, 2021, https://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/sites/ca.grebel/files/uploads/files/CGR-25-2-S2007-3.pdf.

14. Greg Forster, *Theology That Works: Making Disciples Who Practice Fruitful Work and Economic Wisdom in Modern America* (Deerfield, IL: The Oikonomia Network, n.d.), 27.

while implying that higher human fulfillment is only found outside of economic activity. An additional distressing outcome is identified by Forster:

> As a further consequence, in such societies dignity was not intrinsic to the human person. Rather, people only acquired dignity insofar as they participated in systems of meaning. Each person's dignity was therefore associated not with human personhood, but with fulfilling the social role assigned to that person. The individual human being was merely a cog in the social machine.[15]

It is not difficult to imagine how this degrading of human value leads to oppression, exploitation, corruption and abuse. It also can lead to systemic poverty. Forster reflects on this reality in the first-century Roman Empire saying, "Under all the burdens created by the dualistic mindset, the potential of economic work to create blessing and well-being was radically truncated. Thus, the spiritual poverty of humanity without Christ universally resulted in material poverty as well."[16] Although certainly not the only contributing factor to poverty today, dualism unquestionably contributes to it in cultures where it exists. This direct socio-economic impact is precisely because SSD is a worldview issue. Miller confirms this linkage when he declares, "A worldview does more to influence people's flourishing—their prosperity or poverty—than does their physical environment or circumstances."[17]

To those with this bifurcated view of life, money itself is secular, unclean and evil. It is not uncommon to hear the misquote that money is the root of all evil, when it is the love of money that causes much malevolence (1 Tim 6:10). The common perspective is that 10 percent of a believer's money belongs to God, and the rest it theirs to do as they please without

15. Forster, *Theology That Works*, 28.

16. Forster, *Theology That Works*, 28.

17. Darrow Miller, *Discipling Nations: The Power of Truth to Transform Cultures* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2018), 12.

considering God's purposes and the holy use of all one's possessions. Biblically, all that we have belongs to the Lord, not just a tithe.

When the majority of money that God has endowed to His people to administer is not considered holy, the mission of His Church suffers from a lack of funding. The sacred-secular divide can be a fundamental factor in inhibiting generosity and misuse of possessions by believers. All must come under the His Lordship and be at His disposal for His purposes.

Faith and Science

A final manifestation of this bifurcation of life is to divide faith from science or reason, perceiving them as opposed and often irreconcilable. One of the first to address the tension between faith and science, or religion and reason as it is sometimes articulated, was St. Augustine (354 – 430). This theologian and apologist affirmed the unity of truth. All truth ultimately belongs to God, whether theological, natural or philosophical.[18] Moreover, he postulated the doctrine of two books; God has revealed himself to humankind in the Book of Nature (the created world) and the Book of Scripture (the Bible).[19] The mission of the God's people is negatively influenced by this dichotomy, particularly for those called to serve Him in the area of science. Geologists, biologists, botanists, agronomists and any other scientist are crippled in serving God when their professional field is perceived as secular.

18. Martin H. Levinson, "Science Versus Religion: A False Dichotomy?", *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 423.

19. Levinson, "Science Versus Religion," 423.

The Effects of the Sacred-Secular Divide on the Mission of God's People

This cursory consideration of some of the key manifestations of dualism in Latin America is enough to stimulate reflection on how this untruthful worldview affects the mission of God's people. Because it relegates a large portion of life to a supposed secular realm, this dichotomy limits the scope of active involvement of God's people to the "sacred." The scope of evangelism, discipleship, ministry, and impact are all limited, thus truncating the mission of the Church and its impact in society.

First of all, it limits the scope of who God is as we proclaim and demonstrate him to the world in which we live. It reduces Him to a partially sovereign and caring God, only concerned about the immaterial parts of life. One transformation initiative explains this limitation proclaiming, "God's reputation—as either weak or powerful, loving or demanding—rests in large part on how His people display Him to their communities. Perhaps that's why the Bible reminds us to live our lives in such a way that others see our good deeds and glorify God (1 Pet 2:12)."[20]

Secondly, the scope of evangelism is reduced to only spoken or written words as discussed previously. Dualism does not value the fact that Christ is continually communicated, whether positively or negatively, through all of whom believers are and do. It tends to be limited to evangelistic activities, not a lifestyle of natural relationships. Moreover, because good works and social involvement are not perceived as communicating Christ, the truth is only partially communicated and is reduced to a mainly intellectual pursuit.

20. "Integrating Physical and Spiritual," *Reconciled World*, book 3 of the Transformational Framework series, accessed October 6, 2021, https://frameworkfortransformation.org/wp-content/uploads/Integrating-Physical-Spiritual-booklet-2019.pdf.

This has been the center of theological writing and debate in Latin America, particularly through the writings of theologians such as Samuel Escobar, Emilio Antonio Núñez, Orlando Costas, René Padilla and Pedro Arana. From the nineteen seventies they became regional and global voices for the need of the Church to engage in *misión integral*, that is, integral or wholistic mission. It was a cry to the Church to not be blind to the urgent socio-economic needs of the continent and the world. They argued theologically that mission are more than just evangelistic words; it must be accompanied by engagement with the real effects of sin in the world, the injustice, suffering, disease and inequality too often tolerated by those who proclaimed Christ. Their voices were heard widely. More recently the thoughtful voices of theologians such as Valdir Steuernagel of Brazil and argentine Ruth Padilla DeBorst have added new dimensions to the conversation. Yet, in many parts there is still no change. This study suggests that the adjustment to biblical, integral mission occurs when this divided worldview is addressed at its core.

Thirdly, the scope of discipleship is limited to "sacred" areas of life. Many are never taught to relate the Word of God and the Lordship of Christ to all of life. There is a dearth of intentional formation of godly men and women who embrace a biblical theology of work and have deeply thought through the implications of the rule of Christ in their particular profession. There is a great need to disciple people in a missional spirituality through which they live in the presence of Christ and minister in His name and His power continually, whether at home, on the street, in the market, classroom, store, studio or stadium. SSD causes discipleship to often exclude key elements of mission, including how to relate as God's people to society, the missional identity of the believer, and how to live in the presence of Christ.

Jim Adams reflects on the reality of the lack of influence of the Church on society in Guatemala and asks a penetrating question, "The lament is often heard of why Guatemala continues to suffer high levels of insecurity, violence and corruption in spite of having a high percentage of evangelical Christians. Would it not be better to restate the issue in terms of how to help the Church in Guatemala to develop and work on a biblical profile of a disciple of Jesus Christ?"[21]

After working with believers in various developing nations, Reconciled World observed, "The gospel message, when limited to Christ and salvation, fails to answer the question of how we ought to live today. As a result, some just keep up their old practices with nothing new to replace it. Others use the only tool they have been given – prayer answered by miracles. Both paths prevent us from living as God intended."[22]

Fourthly, this dichotomy limits the scope of ministry. Basically, ministry is limited to the programs of the local church or initiatives of other formal ministries, organizations or institutions. Instead of seeing themselves as servants of God and a kingdom of priests always on mission, those with dualism see only "sacred" activities as ministry. The rest of life is simply their responsibility, but not their ministry. Instead of living a life of service to God and others in all realms of life, believers with this perspective only see activities like teaching a children's class or Bible study and other such church-related initiatives as service to God. This lack of intentionality in daily whole-life discipleship and service greatly reduces the depth and breadth of missional involvement.

21. Adams, *La Formación Espiritual*, 5. My translation.

22. "Integrating Physical and Spiritual," 8.

In a similar manner only those in "full-time Christian ministry" are really considered as servants of God. Everyone else is a lesser servant. Therefore, the men and women in the marketplaces do not consider themselves to be ministers of Christ as they go through daily life, nor do others see them as such.

Another limit in the scope of ministry is that the most vulnerable of society are often not served well. Any service that is given is often only used as bait for sharing the Good News. Yet, the Church is taught in Scripture to love the poor, the hungry, the widows and orphans, the immigrants and other marginalized members of our societies. Erred dualism does not perceive good deeds as part of communicating Christ and myriads of opportunities are squandered because they are not even considered to be in the realm of real ministry.

Lastly, the scope of impact is limited. Significant portions of society are untouched by the people of God who do not seek to make a difference in areas considered "secular." It has been observed by many that even though several countries in Central America have a large percentage of their population claiming to be evangelical, the evils of society continue unabated. Currently, the percentage of those claiming to be evangelicals in Honduras is 23 percent, in Guatemala 24.44 percent, in Nicaragua 29.75 percent, and in El Salvador 31.65 percent.[23] And yet violence, corruption, homicides and injustices on every level abound. In 2021 Honduras and El Salvador have the highest murder rates of any country in the world.[24] Transparency International reports that in terms of corruption, out of 179 nations globally, El Salvador ranks 104th, Guatemala 149th, Honduras 157th and Nicaragua 159th, making them more corrupt than the majority of

23. "Evangelical Population," Operation World, accessed February 26, 2021, https://www.operationworld.org/hidden/evangelical-population.

24. "Murder Rate by Country 2021," World Population Review, accessed February 26, 2021, https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/murder-rate-by-country.

nations.[25] Many are asking why. Where is the impact of the Church? Although the answers and issues are complex, part of the challenge is that these very issues are in general not talked about in the context of the local church, particularly as to how the people of God could apply truth to their real, daily problems, how they could make a difference in society, and why they should even care or be involved. One author summarizes the issue like this:

> When Christians adopt the divided mindset instead of the worldview of the Bible, they lose their desire to engage the culture and therefore do not obey Christ's command to "make disciples of all nations." Filling the earth with the knowledge of the Lord (Isaiah 11:9) is reduced to filling their heart with knowledge of the Lord. When church has this divided mindset, Christians no longer shape media, education, politics or art. They no longer disciple the nations; rather, they are discipled by the nations. They allow the prevailing trends, beliefs, and practices of the secular world to set the agenda.[26]

In a similar vein, Paul Borthwick observes that portions of the church in the Global South tend to ignore societal transformation. He writes,

> Perhaps because they have followed in the footsteps of the dualistic world of their missionary forebearers, Christians in many parts of the Majority World tend to focus on the church, fellow believers and the needs of the Christian community. The society at large gets neglected. Even worse, the Christians who do enter leadership in the worlds of politics, entertainment and academia become cultural replications of their secular counterparts.[27]

Borthwick pinpoints two limitations with this observation: both the limited scope of impact in society and the lack of whole-life discipleship. The two go hand in hand.

Not only is the scope of impact limited locally and nationally, but it is also limited globally in several ways. The impact is limited because for the most part only professional ministers are considered for service in cross-cultural missions, and only occasionally other godly

---

25. "Corruption Perception Index 2020," Transparency International, accessed February 26, 2021, https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl.

26. Scott D. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide: A Call to Wholistic Life and Ministry* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2011), 106-7.

27. Paul Borthwick, *Western Christians in Global Missions: What's the Role of the North American Church?* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 100.

professionals are considered as apt for missionary service, and often only then if they leave their "secular" job. Secondly, the global impact is limited because the only way often considered "spiritual" for a missionary to be supported financially is through offerings. Any "secular" work on the field is considered a distraction from their calling to ministry. This categorization limits both the number of cross-cultural workers deployed as well as opportunities for service. Thirdly, the means by which a cross-cultural worker can communicate Christ in a new culture are limited because many of the best approaches to connecting and impacting society may be considered "secular." The impact of good works, godly character and healthy relationships are often not sufficiently weighed in missional strategy. Or, if they are contemplated, it is often only as these serve as bait to speak the Gospel and not as an integrated part of the communication of Christ. Lastly, the scope of impact is greatly reduced in the receiving culture because the missionary, usually inadvertently, contaminates their disciples in other cultures with the dualism that they carry with them. The newly planted churches inherit the same debilitating bifurcated worldview, and the opportunity for impact is curtailed.

Miller summarizes the consequences of this insidious worldview saying, "All of this teaching is a reflection of an unbiblical paradigm that has left individuals mere shadows of what God intends, the church largely disengaged from culture, communities mired in poverty, and nations undiscipled."[28] Greene summarizes the consequences of SSD on the mission of the Church by claiming:

> In summary, SSD has affected almost every area of church life, and it has limited mission . . . That is why SSD is the greatest missiological challenge facing the church. Far from "the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world" we have a small

28. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 1, Kindle.

> percentage of the church taking a partial gospel to far, far fewer people than are actually known by the Christians in our congregations.[29]

Research Focus and Setting

Research Focus

The importance of understanding, detecting and combating SSD is clear. Where it exists, it is stifling the Church. The thesis of this research project is that the sacred/secular divide shapes the worldview of believers in Honduras and therefore, negatively affects their participation in the mission of God.

Although many have written and commented on this harmful worldview, I have been unable to locate any formal research that proves its existence or measures its incidence. The purpose of this project is to prove its existence in the target population, measure its incidence, and begin to understand its nuances so that it can be addressed purposefully and unambiguously. Ideally, research would be conducted to prove the cause-effect relationship of SSD to mission. However, it must be noted that there is a high level of complexity in social research for proving causality, mainly due to the complication of eliminating other variables that might be causal.[30] Therefore, the research question for this thesis-project is: Does a sacred-secular divide exist that negatively affects participation of believers in Honduras in the mission of God?

Research Setting

Three urban settings in Honduras were chosen as the foci for research. The primary reason for choosing this location was my own personal experience and long relationship with

29. Greene, *The Great Divide*, 16.

30. Brian Auday, telephone interview, October 16, 2020.

Honduran church leaders. I was raised in this mountainous Central American country where my parents served as missionaries for thirty-six years. After seminary in Guatemala, I had the privilege of pastoring a church in Siguatepeque, Honduras, for seven years while also serving in national leadership both for the denomination and with other endeavors. When we left the country, it was as missionaries sent from there to Albania to lead a team from Central America. Our sending church is there, and we maintain close ties. Furthermore, from 2012 to 2019 I was the president of Camino Global, the mission entity that by the early twentieth century had founded the denomination in several Central American countries. In that capacity I had frequent interaction with the denominational leadership. Moreover, I was ordained there and continue my membership in the church association as a pastor. All of this relational capital and experience in Honduras made it the logical place on which to focus the research.

In order to understand the actuality of the Church in Honduras, it is important to have a general grasp on the reality of the country by considering broad strokes of information about the socioeconomic and religious setting, as well as the denomination of the churches studied.

The Socio-economic Setting

According to the World Bank, the population of the country in 2019 was 9,746,117.[31] Over the past fifty years the urban population has swelled from 28.9 percent to 57.73 percent of the population.[32] Much of the movement to the cities is driven by educational and employment opportunities. The research was carried out in three urban centers: the capital city of Tegucigalpa with a population of 1.3 million, the southern city of Choluteca with a population of 169,000,

31. "Honduras," The World Bank Data, accessed February 26, 2021, https://data.worldbank.org/country/honduras?view=chart.

32. "Urban Population (% of the Total Population) Honduras," World Bank, Levinson, accessed February 26, 2021, https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=HN.

and the central city of Siguatepeque with a population of 110,000.[33] These urban centers rank first, ninth and thirteenth in size nationally.[34]

Honduras is a country with substantial poverty. There was noteworthy positive economic growth from 2017 to 2019, but the global pandemic of 2020 as well as two devastating hurricanes on the industrial north coast the same year caused much damage.[35] Almost two-thirds of Hondurans live below the poverty line,[36] the majority of which live in rural areas. However, 38.4 percent of those in the poverty category are urban dwellers.[37] Another noteworthy element is that the inequality of distribution of income across the population is among the highest in the world.[38] Because of this disparity, the middle class of Honduras is only 11 percent of the population, one of the smallest in the region.[39] The World Bank study concludes the evaluation of the events of 2020 saying, "the employment and income losses are expected to impact the poor, the near poor and the middle class."[40]

33. "Honduras—Subnational Population Statistics," spreadsheet, "hnd_admpop_adm2_2020ine.csv," based on data from the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, accessed February 26, 2021, https://data.humdata.org/dataset/6203b8df-ef66-4e55-baba-6d8547438a77.

34. "Honduras— Subnational Population Statistics."

35. "The World Bank in Honduras: Overview," The World Bank, last modified October 9, 2020, accessed February 26, 2021, https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/honduras/overview.

36. Andres Ham, "Social and Economic Impact of the COVID-19 and Policy Options in Honduras," UNDP LAC C19 PDS No.4, April 9, 2020, pdf file, 1. School of Government, Universidad de los Andes, March 2020.

37. "The World Bank in Honduras: Overview."

38. The World Bank uses the GINI Index for economic inequality and gives Honduras a score of 52.1, the highest in the region.

39. "The World Bank in Honduras: Overview."

40. "The World Bank in Honduras: Overview."

Violence, crime and corruption are embedded in Honduran society. Gangs, trafficking, murders, abuse, corruption and violent crime are a too common part of life. According to the U.S. Department of State, there has been recent improvement:

> As a result of Honduran government efforts in close cooperation with the United States, homicide rates have fallen from 86.0 per 100,000 residents in 2012 to 43.6 per 100,000 at the end of 2019. Kidnappings declined by 82% since 2013, from 92 in 2013 to 14 in 2018, and 12 in 2019. Hondurans continue to be affected by MS-13 and Calle 18 gang activity in cities . . . Most crime victims are members of rival gangs, small business owners who resist gang extortion, passengers on public transportation, or those involved in land tenure disputes.[41]

But, even with improvement, crime and violence coupled with poverty are enough to continue to drive people to flee the country.[42] Because corruption permeates all levels of society, eradication of these social ills is complex. Human Rights Watch states, "Efforts to reform public-security institutions have stalled. Marred by corruption and abuse, the judiciary and police remain largely ineffective."[43]

It is in this complicated societal ambient that the Church must navigate what it means to be on mission for God. These convoluted realities call for His Church to live all of life on mission, not to withdraw from reality or avoid it. The sacred-secular divide tends to disengage the believer from these societal "secular" issues, while God calls His people to permeate and engage the culture as salt and light.

---

41. "Honduras 2020 Crime and Safety Report," https://www.osac.gov/Country/Honduras/Content/Detail/Report/14441101-11fd-487c-9d15-18553e50609c, March 31, 2020.

42. "Honduras: Events of 2020," Human Rights Watch, accessed February 26, 2021, https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/honduras.

43. "Honduras: Events of 2020."

The Religious Setting

In conjunction with the socioeconomic backdrop, the religious environment must be taken into account. A sketch of the religious demography of the country outlines key elements, while a more detailed consideration of the target denomination gives color to the religious portrait of Honduras.

Religious demography

When the Spanish conquistadors arrived in Central America, they found an indigenous population with animistic beliefs and practices. An integral part of their *conquista* (conquest) was to force them to convert to Roman Catholicism. From that time until the second half of the twentieth century, the vast majority of persons in Central America identified themselves as Roman Catholic. In the past fifty years that has changed. According to the Digital Christian Observatory, 92 percent of Hondurans claim religious affiliation, with 45 percent identifying as Roman Catholic and 40 percent as Protestant.[44] Other religious groups make up 5 percent of the nation; these include Mormons, Baha'is, Muslims, African and Amerindian religions.[45] As noted above, Operation World places the evangelical population at 23 percent while the Joshua Project asserts that over 27 percent of the population claim to be part of the evangelical church, which is growing at a 4.4 percent annual rate.[46]

---

44. "2019 International Report on Religious Freedom: Honduras," The Office of International Freedom, accessed February 26, 2021, https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/honduras/.

45. "Religious Freedom: Honduras."

46. "People Groups: Honduras," Joshua Project, accessed February 26, 2021, https://joshuaproject.net/countries/HO.

Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas de Honduras (ASIECAH)

The first evangelical missionaries to Spanish speakers arrived in Honduras at the end of the nineteenth century.[47] They were with the Central American Mission, later Camino Global, and now merged with Avant Ministries. The mission was founded by Dr. C. I. Scofield, the well-known dispensational theologian of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beginning in 1896 these missionaries spread the gospel, planted churches, started schools and founded a hospital.[48] Today there are about 450 churches in the denomination across the country.[49] The 14 local churches examined in the research are from this denomination.

The doctrinal distinctives of the ASIECAH churches are those of the founding mission. They are conservative evangelical, non-charismatic, and traditional dispensationalists. This study will contemplate the influence of this history and doctrinal persuasion on the current presence of this harmful dualism, and, consequently, on the mission of the Church.

In this chapter the profound challenge of a dualistic worldview has been laid out by examining both its symptoms and its effects on the Church and its mission. Additionally, the setting of the research in Honduras has been depicted in order to better understand the context and the challenges facing the Church in this Central American nation. However, in order to more completely grasp SSD and understand how it truncates the mission of God's people, the sources

47. Before this time, there was work of Anglicans along the coast among minority and immigrant populations and in the mid-nineteenth century the Wesleyans and Baptists began work in the Bay Islands with English speakers. For more details see Clifton L. Holland, "An Historical Profile of Religion in Honduras," revised July 20, 2001, accessed May 25, 2020, http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/cam/hon/honduras.html.

48. This history is developed at length in my master's thesis, "Una Historia Interpretativa de las Iglesias Evangélicas Centroamericanas en Honduras, 1896-1945" (master's thesis, Seminario Teológico Centroamericano, Guatemala, 1985).

49. Edulfo Dubón, president of ASIECAH, text message to author, February 26, 2021.

of this bifurcated worldview must be explored. In chapter 2 the roots of sacred-secular divide will be revealed.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROOTS OF THE SACRED-SECULAR DIVIDE

At least a rudimentary comprehension of the origins of SSD is indispensable in order to determine the implications for mission as well as confront and eradicate this unbiblical worldview from the Church. For the purposes of this research project, it is expedient to specifically explore how this perspective of life and mission came to the Church in Latin America. Yet that it is a challenging task as neither Latin America nor the Latin American Church are by any means homogeneous; there are many cultural and historical influences that shape the way people think from place to place across the continent.

The majority of studies of the history of dualism focus on Western thought and philosophy. In the case of Latin America, it is also imperative to begin there, as Western thought historically did and currently does have an influence on Latin American worldview, through the conquering Europeans, through North American and European evangelical missionaries that carried the Gospel to these lands, and through mass media today. Consequently, this overview will consider the amalgamation of influences from Western thought, from the Mayan worldview in Central America, from the Spanish conquest, and, finally, from the influence of conservative Evangelical missionaries from the West and the theology they brought to Honduras.

Influences from Western History

Greek Philosophy

The roots of dualism can be traced back to the philosophies of the Ancient Orient and the Ancient Near East.[1] Those philosophies were strongly dualistic, insisting that the physical realm was a nonrational illusion while the spiritual realm was real. Greek thought was born from the influence of eastern philosophy.[2] Nonetheless, for this study it is sufficient to initiate the search for roots with the Greco-Roman world into which the Church was born over two millennia ago. Although the Jewish culture was wholistic in its view of life, as the Gospel spread from Jerusalem throughout the Roman Empire, it came in contact with conflicting worldviews. Greek philosophy with its dualism was prevalent in the Roman Empire and can be traced back to several centuries before Christ. One of the first Greek philosophers to express dualistic notions was Pythagoras (580 – 500 BC). He was born on the Island of Samos and is said to have travelled much to Egypt and the Orient, where he was influenced by oriental thought.[3] He taught, "The essence of the physical world and even of abstract concepts could be expressed through mathematics. Numbers, not the physical world, represented true or ultimate reality."[4]

In the next century Plato developed these ideas further:

> The Greek philosopher Plato (c. 428–348 BC) provided the defining inspiration for much thought that was to follow over several centuries. He described the material world as a shadow of the spiritual, or real, world. The finite, material world was simply a shadowy projection of the permanent and eternal real world . . . Plato's point is that the things that

1. For an overview of dualism in ancient philosophies of the east see, for example, Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. "Historical Varieties of Religious Dualism," accessed March 8, 2021, https://www.britannica.com/topic/dualism-religion/Historical-varieties-of-religious-dualism.

2. Darrow Miller, *LifeWork: A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2009), chap. 2, Kindle.

3. Giannis Stamatellos, *Introduction to Presocratics: A Thematic Approach to Early Greek Philosophy with Key Readings* (Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons, 2012), 12.

4. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

> we observe with our senses are merely shadows of the reality—the universals—that we cannot see.[5]

Platonism built on the philosophy of Heraclitus (535 – 475 BC) with his premise that matter is in constant flux.[6] Plato, like Heraclitus, taught that nothing material was permanent or eternal. However, he was not content with only that. As Dr. Christian Overman explains, "He pointed his pupils to another world. A world that was not affected by change. It as the world of the 'metaphysical'. . . , a non-physical realm of perfect 'ideals' which were not subject to the continual birth and death cycle of the physical, material world."[7] These ideals, which he referred to as "form" were eternal, ideal and universal, and, consequently, had more significance for Plato than the material.[8] Over time, the effect of platonic philosophy was that "the temporal world of matter is *inferior* to the eternal world of forms . . . , which lie above and beyond the physical, material world . . . Plato's division of the physical and metaphysical realm had the net effect of *devaluating* physical matter and *elevating* ideals."[9]

From these origins, dualistic ideas and schools of thought developed. Like Platonism, they separated physical reality from the realm of what is good or ideal or permanent. They believed that only the mind with its ideas could connect with the good and eternal. The physical, material world was seen as inferior, temporary and negative. As Darrow Miller explains, "The body was little more than a prison for the truer, valuable element of the self."[10]

---

5. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

6. Christian Overman, *God's Pleasure at Work: Bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide* (Bellevue, WA: Ablaze Publications, 2009), 33.

7. Overman, *God's Pleasure*, 33-34.

8. Overman, *God's Pleasure*, 34.

9. Overman, *God's Pleasure*, 34.

10. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

The minimization of the material lead to the belief that physical work was not nearly as valuable as the world of ideas and education. Labor was demeaning. "Physical work was, in effect, an inferior use of man's time and talents. The Platonic understanding also justified holding women in low status, because they were seen as 'physical' beings, made for childbearing (a function of the 'lesser,' profane, and limiting body) and managing a (material) household."[11]

Gnosticism

As the early Church developed, Gnosticism was prevalent and opposed to a biblical understanding of reality. True to its platonic roots, Gnosticism distinguished the material world as evil and profane. Similar to Plato, the Gnostics believed that the true self, which was made up of divine elements, was entrapped in the physical body. The word "gnostic" means "secret and mysterious knowledge," and it was by such revealed knowledge that, according to Gnostics, one could escape the material world and progress upward to the eternal, spiritual world.[12]

There were those in the early church who were early proponents of heretical, gnostic teaching yet considered themselves Christians. Because in their belief that the physical is inferior and even evil, they taught that Jesus could not and did not come in a human body but only appeared to have done so. This heresy that threatened the Church was finally put to rest at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. However, elements of a gnostic worldview have persisted to plague Christianity over the centuries. In fact, this is so much of a contemporary reality that Miller refers to the dualism present today as "Evangelical Gnosticism" and adds, "We are showing a gnostic orientation whenever we demean things of the physical world or see them as

11. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

12. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

unimportant (e.g., the environment, government, art, justice, or public health), or see work in fields that deal with them as a less-than-full-time Christian calling."[13]

Early Church Fathers

Some of the church fathers were also influenced by this dualism. As Mark Greene explains,

> Augustine, great man that he was, was significantly influenced by Greek thought, which believed that the spirit, the non-material world, was totally superior to the material world. So, anything to do with work was a bad thing. The key point of life was contemplation. Leisure was what you wanted to get to, so the Roman word for business was *neg otium*, "not leisure." Leisure was the high ideal; "not leisure" is a pity, because you're not able to contemplate, to be involved in the non-material world of meditation and ideas.[14]

It should be noted that while there is evidence of the divide in the writings of Augustine, in his magnum opus, The City of God, he seeks to unite the "City of God" and the "City of Man." As one Augustinian erudite acutely observes:

> Augustine, then, does create a nominal divide between the sacred and the secular. The sacred exists apart from the world while the secular exists wholly in the world. Christ, as head of the church, mediates the two worlds, the two cities, the two citizenships. In this sense there is no divide between the sacred and the secular as the two meet … in the proper mediation of the two through the true...Church headed by Christ. …Because the church is the mediator between the two worlds, there is no dialectical thought – properly speaking – in Augustine's work. Augustine is a unitive thinker. The dialectic seemingly embedded in Augustine's work is not a dualism but a unitive in symbiotic relationship. …There is no secular and sacred divide in Augustine because God works in this world and through time. God calls all to him, though not all will answer him. The mediating presence of the Lord, in and through his Church, ensures there is no "secular accommodation" but the other way around, a sacralization of the city of man.[15]

---

13. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

14. Mark Greene, *The Great Divide* (London, UK: London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, 2010), 5.

15. Paul Krause, "Augustine on the Sacred and the Secular," *Discourses on Minerva* (blog), June 10, 2020, https://minervawisdom.com/2020/06/10/augustine-on-the-sacred-and-the-secular/#comments.

Eusebius (c. 260 – c. 339), the bishop of Caesarea, is sometimes called "the father of church history." In *Demonstration of the Gospel*, he claimed that there are two levels of piety available to Christians:

> Two ways of life were given by the law of Christ to his Church. The one is above nature, and beyond common human living. . . . Wholly and permanently separated from the common customary life of mankind, it devotes itself to the service of God alone…. Such then is the perfect form of the Christian life. And the other more humble, more human, permits men . . . to undertake government, to give orders to soldiers fighting for right; it allows them to have minds for farming, for trade, and the other more secular interests as well as for religion . . . And a kind of secondary grade of piety is attributed to them.[16]

Eusebius is saying that there are two forms of the Christian life; one is perfect and preferred, the other is imperfect but permitted. The better life is higher, sacred and dedicated to contemplation. It is for monks and priests and religious professionals, who were superior spiritually to common Christians. The permitted life is "lower, secular and active";[17] it "encompasses secular vocations dedicated to action, such as governing, farming, trading, soldiering, and homemaking."[18] A "secondary grade of piety" was all to which most Christians could attain according to Eusebius, "a soul-crunching conclusion" for them as Stephens and Lim lament.[19]

16. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Demonstration of the Gospel (Demostratio Evangelica)*, book 1, chapter 7, accessed March 10, 2021, http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eusebius_de_03_book1.htm.

17. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

18. Hugh Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work* (McLean, VA: Institute for Faith, Work and Economics, 2012), 87.

19. Clive Lim and Paul Stephens, *Money Matters: Faith, Life, and Wealth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021), 43.

The Middle Ages

The same perspective on life was also evident in Christian hermits and in the monastic system that developed soon after and flourished throughout the Middle Ages. Miller comments,

> One avenue in which dualism was absorbed into the mainstream of Christian thought was through the early development of monasticism . . . The monks' radical rejection of "the world" and their focus on a more perfect union with the holy can best be comprehended in the context of the Greek/Eastern dualistic philosophy . . . At first monks were all hermits, individuals who would as much as possible forsake all things "of the world" and go off alone (often literally into the wilderness or desert) to pursue "the things of God."[20]

And so, "Throughout the Middle Ages, laypeople—especially those living 'in the world,' not in a consecrated 'religious' life—were seen as having a distinctly passive and inferior role, dependent on 'the church' for their relationship with God, the transmission of his grace to them, and their eternal salvation."[21]

Hugh Whelchel, Executive Director of the Institute of Faith, Works and Economics, makes the following observations regarding this period in Church history:

> In the medieval church, having a vocation or calling referred exclusively to full-time church work. If a person felt a calling, this was a sign that he or she might "have a vocation," which meant becoming a priest, a monk, or a nun. The ordinary occupations of life—being a peasant farmer or kitchen maid, making tools or clothing, being a soldier or even king—were acknowledged as necessary but worldly. Such people could be saved, but they were mired in the world. To serve God whole-heartedly and to live a genuinely spiritual life required a full-time commitment.[22]

The Reformation

On the European continent the Renaissance that began in the fourteenth century brought a humanistic worldview and more political power to the pope and his followers. This led the

---

20. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

21. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

22. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work?*, 88.

Roman Church further from a biblical worldview and praxis. The Reformation was in part a reaction to the dualism that was accentuated in the practice of the church and allowed for abuses by those in power. One of the focal theological battles that Martin Luther, John Calvin and other reformers waged was for the recuperation of the priesthood of all believers and with it the dignity of all work. Miller explains it saying, "In sum, the Reformers argued two main points. First, all Christians, not just religious workers, have a calling. Second, all work, not just "spiritual" work, can be considered a calling. The sacred-secular dichotomy is abolished for those who embrace this biblical thinking."[23] In a remarkably bold and controversial statement for his time, Luther penned in *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*:

> Therefore, I advise no one to enter any religious order or the priesthood, indeed, I advise everyone against it—unless he is forearmed with this knowledge and understands that the works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.[24]

This declaration by the reformer was a condemnation of the dualism of his day and a frontal assault on the self-importance of the religious professionals. However, it greatly elevated the common person and the importance of their calling, life and work.

In the same vein John Calvin wrote, "We know that people were created for the express purpose of being employed in labor of various kinds, and that no sacrifice is more pleasing to God than when every person applies diligently to his or her own calling, and endeavors to live in such a manner as to contribute to the general advantage."[25] The English reformer William

---

23. Miller, *LifeWork,* chap. 2, Kindle.

24. Martin Luther, "An Appeal to the Working Class of German Nationality as to the Amelioration of the State of Christendom, 1520," in *Selected Writings of Martin Luther*, ed. Theodore G. Tappert (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 430.

25. John Calvin, *Harmony of the Evangelists*, 2:143, quoted in Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work?,* 163.

Tyndale expressed the same sentiment of pleasing God with our work: "If we look externally, there is a difference between washing dishes and preaching the Word of God, but as touching to please God, there is no difference at all. That's a biblical view of work, that there is no difference when done to the honor of the Lord between preaching and washing dishes."[26]

These reformers made an unequivocal assault on dualism in the Church. They asserted that physical labor is equally important to God as mental work and just as spiritual as the "religious" work of professionals. The priesthood of all believers makes all work of commensurate value. This was a nation-altering affirmation.[27]

Pietism

During the first two centuries after the Reformation, the religious landscape of Europe was substantially altered. First of all, many nations had broken with the Roman Catholic Church and become Protestant. In most cases these churches had close ties to the powers of the state, so much so that being a member of the state church was indistinguishable from being a citizen of that state. Miller observes two other issues at this time in Church history. Some of these denominations or traditions had become more concerned with having the correct theology than on living a in a godly manner in daily life. Additionally, in these earlier centuries of the Protestant states, participation in independent movements or churches was often suppressed, at times even leading to wars.[28]

---

26. "William Tyndale," Grace Quotes, accessed October 10, 2019, https://gracequotes.org/author-quote/william-tyndale.

27. Much has been written about the Protestant work ethic and its effect on the development of nations. Max Weber proposed this theory in *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* in 1959. Although controversial for some, his work nonetheless established a historical link between work ethics and economy.

28. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

These conditions gave birth to a new desire for reform and renewal among many who desired a recovery of spiritual meaning. That longing gave birth to a movement know as Pietism, the effects of which are still felt globally. The beginnings of Pietism can be traced to a movement in the Lutheran Church of Germany in the late sixteenth century. In addition to Lutheran Pietism, there were also other similar branches such as Reformed Pietism and Moravian Pietism.[29] In general these independent religious movements stressed personal experience over orthodoxy, which brought spiritual renewal to the lives of many as well as involvement in global missionary efforts.[30] However, as Pietism pertains to dualism, Francis Schaeffer noted the connection in *A Christian Manifesto*:

> Pietism began as a healthy protest against formalism and a too abstract Christianity. But it had a deficient, 'platonic' spirituality. It was platonic in the sense that Pietism made a sharp division between the 'spiritual' and the 'material' world—giving little, or no, importance to the 'material' world. The totality of human existence was not afforded a proper place. Christianity and spirituality were shut up to a small, isolated part of life.[31]

There was then in Pietism a focus on withdrawing from the surrounding culture to focus on the inner life. Although these movements as such ended, their impact continues through the evangelical movement in the United States and, more specifically, in the those who took the gospel to Central America. This influence will be considered later in this examination of the roots of this harmful worldview.

---

29. For a succinct comparison of these and other branches of Pietism see for example "Christian History: The Roots and Branches of Pietism," accessed March 10, 2021, https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/roots-and-branches-of-pietism.

30. Miller, *LifeWork,* chap. 2, Kindle.

31. Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1981), 18-19.

The Age of Reason

Also known as the Enlightenment, this period of history brought a radical reorientation of thought in science, philosophy and politics in Europe. During this era of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the intellectual forerunners of the Enlightenment questioned traditional authority while embracing the idea that humanity could improve itself with the use of reason.

Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804) was influential in this shift. He purported that there are two parts to reality: a phenomenal reality and a noumenal reality. Hugh Welchel explains:

> The *phenomenal* is the public world of empirical fact, that which can be proven with reason alone. By contrast, the *noumenal* world deals with morality and spirituality, things which cannot be rationally or empirically proven. All beliefs in this realm must be accepted by faith; therefore, we cannot know these things for certain. Noumenal beliefs should be kept private and outside of public domain. Such a dichotomy between fact and spirit produced a compartmentalization in Western thinking. Sacred and secular are seen as divided . . .[32]

One of the outcomes of the Age of Reason was deism, the belief that the Creator made the universe and then totally withdrew for mankind to run the world. God is seen as distant and uninvolved, while man is perceived as god, the center of the universe. Miller observes that "deists attempted to transform traditional Christianity into a religion based on reason. For most there was still a spiritual realm, but it was rather detached from the physical realm. Some simply came to see spirituality as a figment of the human imagination and irrelevant to our lives."[33] The foundation was laid for the rise of secularism.

---

32. Hugh Welchel, "The Historical Influences of the Sacred-Secular Divide," Institute for Faith, Work and Economics (blog), October 17, 2016, https://tifwe.org/historical-influences-of-the-sacred-secular-divide/.

33. Miller, *LifeWork,* chap. 2, Kindle.

The Great Awakening

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, even as humanism dominated culture, a great spiritual revival transpired in both Europe and the United States. It was a return to biblical faith and practice. It brought about not just personal change, but also impressive social transformation. Missiologist Dr. Ralph Winter referred to this movement as "First Inheritance Evangelicalism."[34] Those who came to Christ during this revival had a wholistic understanding of the gospel that comprised personal salvation, social transformation and global missions.[35] This comprehensive worldview obligated action in society at all levels. Many civic and political leaders were produced by this revival who determined that their faith drove them to change the world.

One of the most recognized agents of change that was brought about in England by the Great Awakening was William Wilberforce and his colleagues in the Clapham Sect. Although he is best known for his monumental achievement of provoking the abolition of slavery in the British Empire, he also opposed alcoholism, sexual immorality, unjust working conditions and other injustices. He was one of many who God used to positively transform their nations.[36]

---

34. Ralph Winter, "The Future of Evangelical Missions," Mission Frontiers (September – October 2007), https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/the-future-of-evangelicals-in-mission.

35. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

36. Many books have been written about the effects of the Church on history and society. See for example D. James Kennedy, *What if Jesus Had Never Been Born: The Positive Impact of Christianity in History* (Nashville: Nelson Books, 1994).

The Modern Era

During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, despite the influence of the Great Awakening, secular materialism was on the rise. It came as a result of the Age of Reason. It was particularly set in place in 1859 with the publication of Charles Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species.* His theory of evolution gave a natural explanation of the origin of the universe with no need for a Creator and gave birth to atheistic materialism. There was no room for the spiritual since reality was deemed as only matter; there was no transcendence.

Mennonite pastor and author Earl Zimmerman summarizes other contributions to secularization saying "Nineteenth-century social thinkers such as Auguste Comte, Émile Durkheim, and Max Weber inherited this secular/sacred dichotomy and thought within it. They imagined the ancient world to be dominated by the sacred and postulated that, because of the advent of science and reason, the modern world was gradually becoming more and more secular."[37] In their postulation, the hegemony of the secular was a growing and welcome reality.

Ultimately, there was really no place for the "spiritual" for the secular materialist. As Miller affirms, "In terms of the sacred-secular dichotomy, materialism does not merely emphasize the secular over the sacred; it recognizes only the secular."[38] Therefore, the impact on the Church was enormous. There were those in the Church who embraced secular materialism and others who rejected it. Those that welcomed it, known as "liberals," ended up rejecting absolute truth, denying the miraculous, and rejecting both the fall and sinfulness of man. Their mission became bringing the Kingdom of God to the world through human effort and knowledge

37. Earl Zimmermann, "Beyond Secular and Sacred: An Anabaptist Model for Christian Social Ethics," 51, https://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/sites/ca.grebel/files/uploads/files/CGR-25-2-S2007-3.pdf.

38. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

with no attention to a repentance, salvation or personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ.[39] This became known as the "social gospel."

On the other hand, those who rejected secular materialism and the "social gospel" were known as "fundamentalists" because they held to the fundamentals of biblical faith and emphasized the truth of Scripture and the requisite of a personal relationship with Christ for salvation. Although correct in this stance for doctrinal orthodoxy, they also, unfortunately, ended up with an unbiblical worldview and instead embraced a dualistic perspective that deemed the spiritual realm as sacred and the material world as profane. The sacred-secular divide had reappeared. As overreaction to the liberals' denial of the spiritual realm, the fundamentalists embraced pre-Reformation dualism.

Another crucial aspect secular humanism which is observable in contemporary dualism is the division of truth. The author who originally exposed this to the Christian world was renowned Christian thinker Francis Schaeffer in his classic work *The Age of Reason* in 1968.[40] He compared this bifurcation of truth to a two-story house with private truth on the upper story and public truth on the lower story. Nancy Pearcey in her award-winning book *Total Truth* addresses this dichotomy at a macro cultural level in the West, particularly the United States. She observes that SSD in Western world "is reinforced by a much broader division rending the entire fabric of modern society – what sociologist call the public/private split."[41] Pearcey's

39. Scott D. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide: A Call to Wholistic Life and Ministry* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2011), 102.

40. Francis Schaeffer, *The Age of Reason* (Leicester, England: University and Colleges Christian Fellowship, 1968).

41. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 20-21.

amplification of Schaeffer's two stories of truth is beneficial. Her four graphs can be condensed into one.[42]

UPPER STORY
Private – personal preferences
Values – individual choice
Truth – nonrational, noncognitive
Postmodernism – subjective, relative to particular groups

LOWER STORY
Public – scientific knowledge
Values – binding to everyone
Truth – rational, verifiable
Modernism – objective, universally valid

Figure 1. Pearcey's View of Two Stories of Truth

The result of bifurcation of truth was a rupture between public and private life. Austrian-born American theologian and sociologist Peter Berger observed, "Modernization brings about a novel dichotomization of social life. The dichotomy is between the huge and immensely powerful institutions of the public sphere . . . and the private sphere."[43] By public sphere the author refers to the state, large corporations and academia while the private sphere contemplates the realms of family, church, personal life and relationships. In modern Western society, there is little allowance for faith (private sphere) to infiltrate and inform the public sphere. The practical implications for the believer in Christ that is molded by modernism are far-reaching and devastating for the impact of the Church in and on the culture.

42. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 20-21.

43. Peter Berger, *Facing Up to Modernity: Excursions in Society, Politics, and Religion* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977), 133.

A final manifestation of modern secularism is the Global Youth Culture that is influencing today's youth through media and music.[44] Secular humanism is one of the worldview pillars of this demographic. It is not necessarily atheistic, but faith is personalized and marginalized. A person can believe what they want but not impose it on others. As in other forms of postmodernism, relativism and tolerance are valued. The Global Youth Culture contributes to the dichotomy under review by discouraging a radical commitment to any truth and restraining faith to the private sector.

This overview of the roots of a divided worldview in Western philosophy is crucial to understanding its existence in the evangelical church in Latin America. First, as noted above, it is crucial because it was Western missionaries who took the gospel to these lands, carrying with them their cultural baggage. Secondly, it formed the thinking of the Spaniards who invaded Latin America. Thirdly, global media, ever more accessible, continues to dispense current versions of dualism that influence worldview. Nonetheless, it is not the only contributing factor. Beyond the Western influence from various sources, it is expedient to consider the thinking of those who were in Mesoamerica before any from the West arrived. Neither the Spanish conquistadors nor the evangelical missionaries arrived to a cultural vacuum.

Influences from the Mayan World

Prior to the European powers colonizing the Americas, the inhabitants of these lands had their own religion and worldview. Among the numerous indigenous groups in Honduras in the

44. Aaron Pierce, "Jesus and the Secular World" (online seminar presented by MissioNexus, April 30, 2019).

era of the conquest, the Maya were the most advanced.[45] The city of Copan, in western Honduras, had been a major cultural, religious, and commercial center of the Maya. Even though by the time of the Spanish conquest the Mayan civilization in Central America was several centuries beyond its apex, nonetheless, the civilization's cultural values and beliefs were intact in Mesoamerica.

The influence of the pre-Colombian animism on current worldview should not be minimized. Although many of the descendants of the original ethnic groups have lost the language and much of their practices, particularly those in urban areas, the remnants of worldview are observable. For example, in much of Central America it is the practice of some to tie a red thread to newborn babies and animals to keep away the "evil eye." Fetishes are commonly used to ward off evil. During my time as a pastor, one of the parishioners I visited in the hospital asked me for an evangelistic tract, not to share her faith, but to put on her wound so that it would heal better. Some merchants wash the walkway in front of their store each day in case a competitor left a spell that would harm their business. Similarly, in Guatemala Hector Pivaral observes, "it is not uncommon to see someone place a Bible open to Psalm 91 at the head of the bed of a sick person. Why do they do it? To fulfill some possible requirement so that a healing miracle may occur."[46] These and other similar practices are an inheritance from the pre-Colombian animistic cultures that persist and are concrete evidence of the influence on current worldview in Mesoamerica. Any consideration of dualism in current worldview would be negligent if not taken into account.

---

45. Encyclopedia Britannica, s.v. "History of Honduras," accessed March 26, 2020, https://www.britannica.com/place/Honduras/History.

46. Hector Pivaral, "Guatemala, A Case Study: The Evangelical Church and the Influential Animistic Spirituality," in *Global Mission, Reflections and Case Studies in Contextualization for the Whole Church* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011), 129.

The Mayan worldview was predominantly integrated as it asserted that the spiritual and physical worlds were entwined and closely related. As one historian observes,

> All indications are that the Maya were a deeply religious people, extremely interested in the supernatural and convinced that gods and stars and planets brought good or ill fortune into their lives. A firm belief that placating supernatural powers can bring rewards reinforces further efforts—the gods can be an investment, particularly when they are inextricable (sic) interwoven with the powers that also control the economy.[47]

The Argentine pastor, author and Church historian Pablo Deiros offers a similar perspective of the Mayas, as evidenced in agricultural practices:

> The afterworld or supernatural indigenous pre-Colombian world was intimately linked to the present or natural world. This is indicated by the Mayan 'Prayer to the Seven Directions' that is still used in ritual practices which says, "that from the South, House of the Eternal Sun, may rise the correct action that brings about the harvest so that we can enjoy the fruits of the planetary being." This shows us the strong connection between natural elements, agricultural practices, and the Mayan worldview."[48]

So, for the pre-Colombian inhabitants of Central America all of life was related to the supernatural. In this sense there was a wholism that counteracts SSD. Nonetheless, there are some elements of dualism that were engrained in their worldview and practice that intertwined with the dualism that came from other lands. Specifically, forms of dichotomy can be observed in their conception of the universe and self, in their understanding of good and evil, in their social hierarchy, and in their fatalistic animism.

First of all, their worldview was characterized by a duality. Deiros elucidates this concept saying,

> By duality in this case it is not understood to be a belief in opposing binaries, rather an eschatological belief in the sense of cyclical and complimentary repetitions. Duality is the very heart of the pre-Colombian worldviews, and this concept informs all of the other

47. Alfonso Moises, "Religion in Mesoamerica," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2, no. 8, Special Issue (April 2012): 24, accessed March 9, 2021, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272740466_Religion_in_Mesoamerica.

48. Pablo A. Deiros, *El mundo religioso latinoamericano* (El Paso, TX: Editorial Mundo Hispano, 2017), 83. All translations from this source are my own.

> most important principles. The Mayan worldview, for example, indicates that the universe and self are dual in their nature. Every human being has a physical side as well as a supernatural side.[49]

This duality is not "a belief in opposing binaries" as is SSD. At the same time, it did emphasize a difference between the physical and spiritual aspects of life. So, although this duality was not the same as that which is under review, it does highlight a spiritual/physical dichotomy that could be reinterpreted as the sacred/secular or good/evil duality that came with the conquest.

This leads to a related, yet separate, second aspect of duality that was the tension between good and evil. This was manifest in the Mayan gods themselves. Specifically, "gods were dualistic in that they had both benevolent and malevolent aspects."[50] Seemingly, these gods were capable of both good and evil. Moreover, their whole religious system was based on this dualism. Good gods like the rain, thunder and lightning were mostly good and opposed mostly evil gods like drought, storms, war and hunger.[51] Each day had a god that required appeasement. The sophisticated Mayan calendar was a deeply religious tool used to determine which god was sustaining each day, if it was a favorable day or not, and how it was to be appeased.[52] This duality allowed even the gods to be ambivalent and not hold to a standard.

A third aspect of Mayan duality is related to their access to the gods according to social hierarchy. It was only those of the priestly order that were perceived to have the capacity to approach the gods, not the majority of people. There was a clear division between those that had spiritual access and the common citizens that did not. In the hierarchy of the Mayans this distinction was clear. The priesthood was inherited, and those who were privileged by birth were

---

49. Deiros, *El mundo religioso*, 84.

50. Moises, "Religion in Mesoamerica," 23.

51. Deiros, *El mundo religioso*, 103.

52. Deiros, *El mundo religioso*, 102.

part of the ruling class and keepers of the esoteric knowledge of science, astrology and history.[53] The gulf of social separation between the ruling class and the masses was immense, making true religiosity or spirituality unattainable for the ordinary citizen.

Lastly, there are dualistic outcomes from the fatalism that is implicit in most animistic cultures, including the Mayan and their descendants. Darrow Miller describes this reality:

> Undergirding such cultures is often a traditional animistic belief system in which spirits animate nature. In such an outlook, moral responsibility is removed from humankind; people are left in the hands of "the fates" or disinterested or even hostile spirits. Seen through this fatalistic lens, reason and efforts to increase understanding and the ability to affect or use natural resources have little apparent value. According to this worldview, work is a curse of fate; work only compounds man's misery. It is drudgery. We work in order to survive.[54]

This fatalistic mindset of the Mayans and other pre-Colombian ethnic groups Central America is still evident in Honduras to varying degrees. It devalues work and removes responsibility for actions. Therefore, it is a contributing factor in this bifurcation that is observable in the evangelical church.

While these manifestations of dualism are not necessarily all the same as the sacred-secular dichotomy, there were key elements of a presence of binary thinking. This worldview came to collide and combine with the worldview of the Spanish who began to settle in Mesoamerica in the sixteenth century.

Influences from the Spanish Conquest

The effect that the Reformation had on Latin America was predominantly through the counter-Reformation that thrived in Spain and Portugal, the primary nations that colonized Latin

53. Francis Polo Sifontes, *Historia de Guatemala: visión de conjunto de su desarrollo político-cultural* (Leon, Spain: Editorial Evergráficas, 1988), 152-55. All translations from this source are mine.

54. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 1, Kindle.

America. While European countries where the Reformation spread were greatly changed by the concept of the priesthood of all believers and the dignity of work, those who came to the shores of Latin America to invade, conquer, ravage and evangelize totally rejected these influences[55]. A dualism was deeply engrained in the worldview of the Spanish colonizers and can be observed in their view of work, education, law, sin and evangelism.

The View of Work

The erudite and prolific Spanish author César Vidal Manzanares in his book on Christianity in Spain titled *La Herencia del Cristianismo: dos milenios de legado* spells out several legacies of the Reformation in Europe that did not have any bearing on Spain or, by influence of the *conquistadores*, on Hispanic America. To begin with, Spain rejected the foundation of the Reformation which is the primacy of Scripture. Their posture had notable repercussions:

> In purely historical and religious terms, the Reformation of the 16th century signified a determined, fervent and enthusiastic desire to return to the worldview of the Bible, a worldview different than that which Roman Catholicism presented . . . On the contrary, the attitude of Spain and of the Indies toward the Bible could not have been more radically different.[56]

The first by-product of this rejection that the author mentions is an unbiblical view of work. The Roman Catholic Church in Spain followed Eusebius with his two categories of believers.

> At the beginning of the 16th century, no one (in Spain) would have disputed the existence of work that was more dignified and less dignified; that certain occupations were not proper for gentlemen or simply for any person of (social) value and even that work was,

55. Sifontes, *Historia de Guatemala*, 102.

56. César Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo: Dos Milenios de Legado* (Tyler, TX: Editorial JUCUM, 2014), 155. All translations from this source are mine.

at the end of the day, a punishment given by God to our original forefathers for their fall in the Garden of Eden. The Reformation presented a radically different view of work.[57]

As a result, Spaniards did not value work, particularly manual labor. A low view of work was borne with them to the lands they conquered and was diffused through their policies, practices, and example to the peoples that they subjugated. Vidal continues, "This more than detrimental mentality continues present until today in nations where the Reformation did not take root."[58]

This perspective on work is echoed in a popular song by Alberto Beltrán, a musician from the Dominican Republic. He captures the sentiment of work being an evil reality to be endured. In 1958 he composed the *merengue* hit "El Negrito de Batey." It's about a worker in the cane fields of the island. The lyrics say in part, "They call me the Little Blackman from the sugar mill, because for me work is the worst enemy. I leave work to the ox because God made work as a punishment . . . Merengue is better than work because having to work causes me great pain."[59] Unfortunately, even with the coming of the gospel, little has been done to confront this philosophy of work with biblical theology. As one Guatemalan missiologist uses three well-known saying as he expresses this reality, "we continue to think like Spaniards that 'work is punishment,' like Catholics that 'soldiers and priests have their food assured' and like the *conquistadores*, 'today we eat and drink because tomorrow we will fast.'"[60]

---

57. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 156-57.

58. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 158.

59. Helen Ryan-Ranson, *Imagination, Emblems, and Expressions: Essays on Latin American, Caribbean and Continental Culture and Identity* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993), 107.

60. David D. Ruiz, in personal email, May 25, 2021. In Spanish the sayings he uses are "el trabajo es un castigo," "chafa y cura comida segura," and "hoy comamos y bebamos que mañana ayunaremos."

In contrast to this low view of work, the Protestant theology is well expressed by Scottish historian Thomas Carlyle (1795 – 1881):

> All Work is sacred; in all true Work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness. Labour, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven. Sweat of the brow; and up from that the sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations, Newton meditations, all Sciences, all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms . . . O, brother, if this is not 'worship,' then I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow Workmen there, in God's Eternity.[61]

Educational Divide

A second legacy of the Reformation that Vidal explores is education. The availability of education to the masses is a well-documented and studied outcome of the Reformation. However, in lands where the Protestant influence was absent, this change came much later. "The submission to the Catholic Church had, among other consequences, that, very different from what happened in the Reformed nations, at the beginning of the 19th Century not only were 90% of the population of Spain illiterate, but also of the Spanish-speaking Americas."[62]

While it is true that the Jesuits did bring quality education to the Americas, they focused on the elite of society since they wanted to continue their influence on the nations. Thiers was not education made available to the common people. It can be argued that keeping the masses illiterate increased the power and control of the elite over them and maintained the social distance of the people from the clergy. It also kept the Catholic religion from being a part of daily life for most. The fact that mass was in Latin until after Vatican II (1962-1965), made it a

61. Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present* (1843), The Literature Network, accessed March 5, 2021, http://www.online-literature.com/thomas-carlyle/past-and-present/35/.

62. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 170.

virtually meaningless ritual for the people, divorced from understanding and from life. From the Latin American perspective, the Roman Catholic religion that the Spaniards brought was mostly a tool of political and social domination. It was a rather meaningless ritual relegated to religious activities but having very little to do with everyday life. The religious part of life was separate from most of life except for the chosen few who were "religious." It was mostly irrelevant to everyone else as far as shaping their view of themselves and their role in society.

Numerous studies show the advantages of literacy: self-esteem, participation in democracy, reduction of crime, decreased poverty and increased involvement in society.[63] These advantages did not come with the *conquistadores* nor with the Christianity that they brought. Moreover, the lack of education for the common people contributed to the division between the religious life and the rest of life.

Authorities above the Law

A third legacy of the Reformation was the primacy of the law, which was a direct attack on the hierarchy of authority that was above the law, whether that of the Roman church or of civil government. The dilemma between the two positions rests in what or who determines correct conduct. Is it submitting to the law or, by contrast, to the institution that established the law and those who control those institutions? For Protestants it was evident that it is the law that has primacy, not the powers that be. For them the Bible is the supreme authority; therefore, no one is above the law. Vidal explains how the Roman church not accepting the primacy of law manifested itself in Spain, and by extension, Latin America:

63. See for example the Read Educational Trust article, "The Benefits of Literacy," accessed March 5, 2021, http://www.read.org.za/useful-info/benefits-of-literacy/. Also, numerous studies by sociologist Robert D. Woodberry.

> In the nations like Spain and its empire where the Counter Reformation took place, a different principle was maintained, one that established not only that everyone was not equal before the law, but, moreover, there were sectors of society that were not submitted to the law. So, it created, even more strengthened, in this way a culture of the justified legal exception.[64]

Vidal further elucidates the consequences writing, "Tragically, the primacy of law . . . was discarded in Spain . . . as well as in the nations that were born from them. This can be seen equally in Italy or Portugal, in Greece or Argentina, in Mexico or Nicaragua."[65]

So, it was accepted without discussion that the Roman Catholic Church, the monarchy and others in high authority and privilege did not come under the law. They believed that they answered directly to God, not to man. Because both the political and religious leadership were above the law, a critical social gap was present between leadership and people, between the "truly religious" and the common man or woman. That religious life was not accessible to the majority. It was another reality, not theirs. The gap between religion and normal life, between the religious and the "secular" was enormous.

A further consequence of primacy of rule over the law was that hypocrisy was legitimized. Many civil and religious leaders were culpable of abusing power and people. As examples to the people, their behavior taught that one could be "religious" in activities of the church and live as they wanted in their private life. This divorce of religiosity and holiness in daily living was accepted as normal. A concrete example of this comes from one of the cities in this study. When I was growing up in there in the 1970s and 1980s, it was common knowledge that the local Roman Catholic priest had fifty-three children around town. And it was not an

64. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 178.

65. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 183.

obstacle to him being a religious leader. The mentality of division between religiosity and life could not be more obvious.

Venial Sins

The treatment of venial sins by the Counter-Reformation church of Spain is a fourth legacy to Latin America. The Bible affirms that all sin is unacceptable to God, and this was the teaching of the Reformation. However, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that certain sins were more tolerable and did not result in separation from God.

> . . . following the only tolerated discourse, the nations of the counter-Reformation accepted as venial sins certain behaviors that are especially damaging to the construction of a society of citizens. Among them could be mentioned the benevolence with which lying and the lack of respect for personal property were accepted. . . . to leave it unquestionably manifest that in Spain . . . as the sword of the Counter-reformation, superstition, corruption and institutional incompetence were tolerated . . . based fundamentally on the commitment of a sin that was considered venial as was lying.[66]

He further observes that "lying is a sad and dominant characteristic of the nations where the Reformation did not triumph."[67]

With this teaching of venial sin, a double standard existed which was a form of relativism of moral values. Vidal continues,

> The people could see themselves submitted to strict criteria in areas like the sexual morality of Catholicism . . . , but the moral laxness that was enjoyed by the governing elites . . . is very revealing. The tribute paid by Catholic nations to that moral relativism has not ceased to be fertilized time and again during the centuries since the Counter-Reformation in the form of systematic corruption, lack of public transparency and moral indebtedness. But, how could it be any other way if lying and lack of respect for private property are only venial sins?[68]

---

66. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 301-2.

67. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 302.

68. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo*, 305.

This moral relativism was a part of SSD then, and it continues currently as well. It allows that parts of life are exempt from God's interest, that immoral behavior is not always important to God. It affirms that parts of life have nothing to do with religious life or with God. So, along with low view of work, the lack of education, and the primacy of the institutions over the law, the teaching of venial sins has accentuated the divided life in Latin America. A final contributing factor was the manner in which the Spaniards arrived in the Americas in the name of Christ but with a wielded, bloody sword in hand.

Bellicose Evangelism

The horrific example given by Spaniards in the name of Christ was undoubtedly the most appalling of dichotomies. In his classic book *The Other Spanish Christ*, John McKay, a Scottish educator and missionary to Latin America, paints a grim picture of what he calls the "bellicose evangelism" of the *conquistadores*.[69] With the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, they called the natives of the land to repent and come to Christ and then slaughtered many who did not as well as some who did. Many conquistadors were evil men, seeking fortune and fame, but fully convinced they were emissaries of the Spanish crown as well as of the Jesus Christ.

The Spaniard Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas in his influential work *Historia de las* Indias, first published in 1552, narrated volumes of atrocities of the *conquistadores* that he observed. One infamous account is of Hatuey, a *cacique* who fled before the murdering Spaniards from the island of Hispaniola for Cuba. He told the natives of the land to beware of the invading Spaniards. There he was captured. MacKay retells the incident stating, "This dauntless

69. John A. MacKay, *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 33.

chief, on being condemned to be burnt alive, was exhorted by his confessor to become converted and go to heaven. 'Are there Christians in heaven?' asked the cacique. 'Why, of course,' was the reply. 'Well, I don't want to go to any place where I shall have any chance of meeting them.'"[70] He was summarily burnt at the stake. The massive split between the professed faith of the *conquistadores* and their horrendous deeds left the indelible impression that Christianity was at best irrelevant to life or, worse yet, utterly repulsive as Hatauy so unambiguously established with his last words.

This synopsis of the effects of the Counter-Reformation on the worldview in Latin America traces influences that have shaped the cultures of these lands and continue to inform cultural outlook and values. Any treatment of a divided worldview in Honduras must take into account the view work, the role of education in determining value, the concept some being above the law, the supposed category of venial sins, as well as the chasm between the proclamation and the practice of Spanish conquerors.

Influences from Protestant Evangelicalism

In order to comprehend the influence of the evangelical missions that brought the gospel to Central America, it is necessary to examine their origin. The evangelical movement in the United States has its roots in Pietism. David Suazo, a professor of Church history and philosophy in Guatemala says, "The Pietist version of the Reformation is what came to us in Latin America. The Reformation did not come to us. It was the Pietism interpreted by the conservative churches of the U.S.A."[71]

---

70. J. B. Terán, *El Nacimiento de la América Española*, 194, quoted in MacKay, *The Other Spanish Christ*, 37.

71. David Suazo, interview by author, Guatemala City, January 14, 2020.

The version of the Pietist movement referred to by Suazo came in reaction to the segments of the Protestant church, mostly mainline denominations, that swallowed secular humanism and sought to bring justice to society solely through human effort. The reaction of the Fundamentalists was to abandon any effort to seek justice and healing of societal issues but, instead, turn to the personal, "spiritual" dimensions of faith. Dwight L. Moody (1837 – 1899) observed the growing influence of secularism in the Church and concluded that Christ's return was imminent.[72] John Darby (1800 – 1882) is considered the founder of the dispensational movement that focused on the urgency of saving souls. Since Christ was about to return, there was a passive attitude toward society. The focus of the Great Awakening for transformation of society was lost.

One of the propagators of dispensational theology was Cyrus I. Scofield. His notes in the Scofield Bible were used to spread this theology not just in North America, but also in Latin America. Scofield was among the founders of both the Central American Mission (CAM) in Dallas in 1890 and the World's Gospel Union (WGU) in 1892. CAM eventually became Camino Global, while WGU in time was renamed Avant Ministries. In 2019 the two organizations merged and retained the name of the latter. Significantly for this study, it was missionaries of CAM that planted the churches in Honduras that are the focus of this research project. Because of the theological bent of most of the missionaries in these churches, certain emphases have been influencing factors in perpetuating the sacred-secular dichotomy in both the country of origin as well as the receptor countries.

72. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

The Eschatological Leap

The first factor that must be considered consists of what renowned Latin American theologian Dr. Emilio Antonio Núñez called *el salto escatológico*, the eschatological leap.[73] He described it as the desire to understand all of the details of end times biblical prophecy at the expense of dealing with the unpleasant and challenging issues of the present. Núñez was describing many that are in the dispensational theology camp. Instead of proactively seeking to transform society, the movement proposed that the sinfulness of man and the desperate condition of the modern world were indications of the near return of Christ. Great efforts were expended to save the lost from eternity without Christ, which is laudable, but it came at the expense of the present implications of that salvation. There was in general a passive stance toward society; it was sinful, condemned and beyond the interest of God's redemption.

A Weak Theology of Work and Vocation

Although most of these missionaries came from and with the Protestant work ethic, a theology of work does not seem to have been a part of their teaching. It is still true today. Few churches in Central America have any significant teaching on daily labor, much less a thought-through, biblical theology of work. They may encourage believers to share the gospel, but little orientation is given as to the implications of the gospel at work.

Darrow Miller evaluates this and other conservative evangelical movements in rather harsh terms:

> The dynamic of the Great Awakening for transformation of society was lost. The movement of Second Inheritance evangelicals has focused on personal salvation and a privatized faith. It has been marked by an anti-intellectualism ("Don't ask questions—just believe!"), an abandonment of culture, and a withdrawal from the world. Evangelical

73. I first heard Dr. Núñez use this phrase during an interaction with pastors and leaders at a conference in Siguatepeque, Honduras, in 1983.

> Gnostics had returned to a dualistic, pre-Reformation paradigm. Religious work, like that of the pastor, evangelist, missionary, and church planter, was seen as a higher calling than secular employment, as it had been in the Middle Ages. People seeking to be godly would want to go into "full-time Christian service." "Secular" work was often stigmatized by those doing "spiritual" work. So once again, Christians were living in two worlds professionally.[74]

In fairness many of those early missionaries to Latin America made very significant contributions to society, particularly through institutions like hospitals, orphanages and schools. With the Central American Mission in Honduras this was certainly the case.[75] Many of the early missionaries were deeply involved in their communities through health, education, and even in municipal governance and local prison reform. Nonetheless, while it seems that Miller overstates his case, at least in the case of CAM missionaries in Honduras, there remains much truth in his analysis. Many of these missionaries carried their own version of SSD, characterized by emphasizing the personal and future benefits of salvation while largely ignoring how God's people should affect society around them. It is more a theology of waiting for Christ's return. Once saved, all there is to do is wait for His return and try to bring as many others as possible to Him. There tends to be an emphasis on justification and glorification, but less so on sanctification. Moreover, the Kingdom of God is seen as wholly in the future, so the eternal is seen as "sacred" and the temporal as "secular" with no relation to the Kingdom of God.

Latin evangelical hymnody also expresses the hopeful waiting for deliverance along with the belief that work is something that we long to escape and that one day will end. The majority of hymns make reference to the return of Christ or heaven. A popular Latin hymn of unknown

---

74. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle. Miller borrows the nomenclature of "Second Inheritance" evangelicals from Ralph Winter ("The Future of Evangelical Missions"). He refers to the mainstream evangelicals that rose after about 1875 and emphasized a personal conversion and the future Kingdom with little stake in political action or social change.

75. This focus of missionaries in Honduras is developed in detail in my thesis "Una historia interpretativa de las Iglesias Evangélicas Centroamericanas en Honduras 1896-1945" (master's thesis, Seminario Teológico Centroamericano, 1985).

authorship, “Yo solo espero ese día” (I only await that day), exemplifies this declaring, “I only await that day when Christ will return. Trouble and all work will end for me when Christ returns, when He takes me to His Kingdom . . . there will be no more sadness nor work for me.”[76]

The division of secular and sacred vocations that came with this theology fits with that of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America. Although for the Evangelicals there are no priests or pope, there are still “sacred” vocations, seen as much preferred and more ho;y than “secular” work.

A Narrow Practice of Communicating the Gospel

The reaction of conservative evangelical theology in the United States to the social gospel at the end of the nineteenth century was another influence on evangelical dualism in Latin America. Since the social gospel movement left out the truth of the gospel, it was appropriately rebuffed by conservative evangelicals. The liberals were all about social action seeking to bring change without the transformational power of Jesus Christ and personal conversion. As is often the case with reactions, the pendulum swung to the other extreme. In an attempt to maintain a biblical balance, the spoken or written presentation of the gospel message became almost the exclusive focus. In the name of the authority of Scripture and the power of the gospel, verbal communication was emphasized at the expense of the truth of the gospel also being communicated through the walk and the works of His people. Evangelistic words were the greatest value. Good deeds and godly living were seen as good, but not as important; the communication of the gospel through character and good deeds was divided from and inferior to the spoken and written Word.

76. My translation.

This emphasis is illustrated in the very first Evangelical church planted in the interior of Honduras in El Paraiso, Copan in 1897. The missionaries arrived to find a town at odds with the Roman church and with hearts that God had prepared to respond to the truth of the gospel. Over one hundred came to faith in Christ. Suprisingly, within only six weeks the missionaries had named elders and deacons and began travelling to other unreached areas to bring salvation to others.[77] Their zeal is laudable, but their imbalance was costly to the formation of unconditional, obedient followers of Jesus who might well have changed the history of the evangelical church in Honduras if they had been conscientiously discipled to maturity by those who conveyed the message of Jesus. This reduction of the mission to the communication of gospel only through words and with negligent discipleship has greatly moderated the bearing of the gospel in Honduran society.

A Summary of the Origins of the Sacred-Secular Divide

The roots of this dichotomy are indeed complex. In Central America there is an amalgamation of influences that have contributed to the worldview of the people and, more specifically, of members of the *Iglesias Centroamericanas*. This assessment of ingredients in the dividing of the mind has delved into the history of Western philosophy in order to discover its development of binary thinking. Secondly, a cursory treatment of the Mayan worldview revealed components of dualism, some of which continue to be manifest in Central America. Thirdly, the Spanish conquest added new ingredients of dualism in the lands they invaded. Lastly, the influence of the evangelical missionaries that brought the gospel to Honduras was scrutinized. The examination of these factors provides clues as to what needs to be addressed from Scripture

77. Dora Shipp, letter to CAM Headquarters written June 3, 1897, published in the Central American Bulletin (July 15, 1897), 13.

in order to provide a biblical-theological rejoinder to this unfounded division of life. The following chapter will develop such a response.

CHAPTER 3

A BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO THE SACRED-SECULAR DIVIDE

A robust theology is needed by the Church in order for believers to be liberated from the sacred/secular divide and to participate freely and fully in the mission of God. This duality disorder calls for a biblical theology that affirms that all of life and all of creation are subject to the rule of God, and that all is encompassed in living by faith and joining in the mission of God. This all-inclusiveness can be referred to as wholism and is a significant component of a biblical worldview. The false dichotomy judges parts of life as having no eternal purpose while from God's perspective all of life is essential to His purposes and, therefore, fills the lives of His followers with meaning. With the aim of developing a biblical theology of wholism, this chapter will begin with a consideration of the overall story of Scripture as it relates to wholism. Secondly, dualism will be examined in Scripture, both the false dualism of SSD as well as biblical dualisms in order to compare and contrast them. Finally, there will be a reflection on the meaning of true discipleship and its ramifications on a divided life.

Why does this study use "wholism" instead of "holism"? According to Merriam-Webster, either term is acceptable.[1] The etymology of the latter is from the Greek *holos*, meaning whole, while the former derives from the English word "whole." "Holism" as applied to the mission of the Church has been somewhat controversial for the past several decades.[2] One Christian non-profit leader explicates their choice of spelling it with a "w" by presenting two arguments. The

1. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "Wholistic: A Natural Evolution of 'Holistic,'" accessed March 23, 2021, https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/wholistic-word-origin-and-use.

2. David J. Hesselgrave, "Redefining Holism," Evangelism and Missions Information Service, July 1999, accessed March 29, 2021, https://missionexus.org/redefining-holism/.

first is that it more naturally associates with "whole" while the second is that it distances the use from that of unbiblical philosophies and paradigms (for example, the New Age movement) which use "holism" and can provoke unnecessary suspicion among some Christians.[3] Those same reasons led to the choice of "wholism" for this research project. Since SSD leaves part of life out of the spiritual realm and out of the mission of God's people, there is a need to recuperate the biblical concept of completeness in the whole of life, the whole gospel, the whole person and the whole mission of God in the whole world.

Scott Allen defines this all-inclusive view of life asserting, "Wholism is the theory or idea that the parts of a whole must be understood in relationship to the whole. It emphasizes the whole and the interdependence of the parts rather than the parts in and of themselves. . . . (it) is used to describe a Christian conception of human life lived out as God designed it."[4]

Wholism in the Mega-Narrative[5]

Any theological approach to life must harmonize with the over-arching story of Scripture, consisting in Creation, Fall, Redemption and Consummation. These four extensive categories synopsize the narrative of the Bible and God's dealing with all of creation. Of this history theologian and author Michael Horton observes,

> It speaks of the triune God who existed eternally before creation and of ourselves as characters in his unfolding plot. Created in God's image yet fallen into sin, we have our

3. Bob Moffit, "What's in a Name: Wholism vs. Holism," Darrow Miller and Friends, October 6, 2011, accessed March 23, 2021 http://darrowmillerandfriends.com/2011/10/06/whats-in-a-name-wholism-vs-holism/.

4. Scott D. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide: A Call to Wholistic Life and Ministry* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2011), 18-19.

5. The term "metanarrative" is often used in the sense of the overall story of God in Scripture. The word was proposed by French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard in 1979. Michael S. Horton, in *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), argues that Lyotard's use of "metanarrative" refers not to the size and scope of the narrative but to the level of discourse and the basis of it. He, therefore, argues that the Bible is not a "metanarrative," but a "mega-narrative." The term is borrowed from Horton.

> identity shaped by the movement of this dramatic story from promise to fulfillment in Jesus Christ . . . Having exchanged our rags for the riches of Christ's righteousness, we now find our identity "in Christ." Instead of God being a supporting actor in our life story, we become part of the cast that the Spirit is recruiting for God's drama . . . This story that runs from Genesis to Revelation, centering on Christ, not only richly informs our mind; it captivates the heart and the imagination, animating and motivating our action in the world.[6]

Pearcey emphasizes the importance of this grand story in overcoming SSD. Commenting on a businessman who overcame the divide, she asks, "How did he free himself from this pervasive dualism?" She provides the answer by affirming, "through a new understanding of the cosmic scope of Creation, Fall, and Redemption. And you and I can overcome dualistic thinking in the same way, to bring healing and wholeness to our lives."[7] It is expedient then that the major components of the biblical narrative be scrutinized, particularly as they pertain to this wholeness. It can be approached like a four-act play.

Creation: All Is Good

In the first act, the curtain opens to an earth without form, empty and in darkness (Gen 1:2). The account of creation delivered in Genesis 1 and 2 affirms that all that God created on earth has innate goodness, coming from the very mouth of Jehovah. The Genesis account was penned by Moses for the purpose of grounding the Israelites in their origin, identity and purpose as they entered the Promised Land. The creation narrative establishes the pre-existence of God, the purpose of creation, and the innate goodness of all He created while simultaneously defining the role of humankind as creators of culture.

---

6. Horton, *The Christian Faith*, chap 1, Google Books.

7. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 83.

The pre-existence of God is an essential fact in confronting dualism, particularly in its Greek origins. Plato taught that "matter was pre-existing and eternal, capable of resisting rational order imposed by the Forms."[8] Biblical truth, in contrast, establishes God as the origin of all creation. He is the exclusive pre-existent One who brought the rest into being. Nothing and no one exists on their own. Because He is the Creator, He is the owner of all. Psalm 24:1 asserts, "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it." There are no true physical or metaphysical realities that do not come from Him.

Creation also communicates eternal purpose and order. Humanity is not the starting point for understanding life or the cosmos; God is the originator of human history and the One who will culminate it. The reformer John Calvin correctly taught that all of creation was bound by God's laws, both moral and physical. All truth belongs to God and is discoverable in all fields of study. There are laws for the material world and laws for mankind. "The difference," observes Pearcey, "is only that humans *chose* to obey the moral law, whereas natural objects have no choice but to obey the laws of physics or electromagnetism."[9]

While SSD claims that certain parts of creation are inferior or evil, the Genesis narrative affirms that all that God made is good. "God saw all that He had made, and it was very good" (Gen 1:31). All of nature, including all flora and fauna, as well as the entirety of the human being were created innately good. Stated negatively, nothing in creation is inherently evil. The apostle Paul tells Timothy, "For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving" (1 Tim 4:4). While "Gnostic Evangelicals" affirm that "secular" things are inferior, the goodness of creation counters their pronouncement. Pearcey validates the

8. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 83.

9. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 84.

biblical argument saying, “Being spiritual cannot be defined simply in terms of roping off and avoiding certain parts of creation—whether movies, cards, dancing or makeup.”[10] If this is understood, believers will demonstrate their deep love for all of God’s creation, see its original goodness, and avoid labeling certain aspects of all that is created as less valuable to God.

Along with creating the natural world, God also holds it together and sustains it. Paul declares of Christ, “for all things in heaven and on earth were created in him—all things, whether visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominions, whether principalities or powers—all things were created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and all things are held together in him” (Col 1:16, 17). Hebrews says of Christ, “he sustains all things by his powerful word” (Heb 1:3). Nature is good because God created it and because He sustains and holds together everything. If He were to let go, all of creation would collapse. The material world is absolutely valuable to the Creator and should be to His followers as well. As Miller concludes, “The Gnostic paradigm is untrue to reality. There is no dichotomy in God’s mind. God has made, sustains, and is redeeming one world, not two, and Christians are called to live in one world.”[11]

A crucial juncture in the creation story is the command that God gave to Adam and Eve to steward His creation. Known as the Cultural Mandate, it delineates the relationship of the original humans to the rest of the created realm. Just as God formed and filled the earth (Gen 1:1-25), He made mankind to form and bring order to His created world. Miller observes two elements to this mandate, one societal and one developmental.[12] The societal mandate begins with the command is to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28). A materialist would see

10. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 84.

11. Darrow Miller, *LifeWork: A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2009), chap. 4, Kindle.

12. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 8, Kindle.

this as simply increasing the number of consumers of resources through population increase. From the divine perspective, however, it connotes filling the earth with image-bearers who glorify Him. Miller explicates, "They have minds and hearts that can innovate and create. To 'fill the earth' is . . . to increase the image bearers who steward and cultivate the earth to bring forth its beauty and bounty. Culture makers are to be sent to every corner of the world to fill the earth with the knowledge of God."[13] Pearcey points out that these first commands "means to develop the social world: build families, churches, schools, cities, governments, laws."[14] Both the filling of the whole earth and the development of all society are implied in this first expression of mankind's purpose.

The developmental element of the mandate is recorded in the second set of the commands of God to the first human couple. It encompasses "subdue" the earth and "rule" the animals (Gen 1:26-28), "work" and "take care" of the Garden of Eden (Gen 2:15) as well as "name" the animals (Gen 2:19, 20). It is worth scrutinizing each term in order to comprehend God's intention for mankind. The Hebrew word *kabash* is translated "subdue" and means to bring under control or dominate.[15] A clear explanation of its meaning in this context can be paraphrased as "harness its potential and use its resources for your benefit."[16] Specifically, "in ancient Israelite context this would suggest cultivating its fields, mining its minerals, using its

13. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 8, Kindle.

14. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 47.

15. Netnotes on Gen 1:28, Net Bible, accessed March 30, 2021, https://netbible.org/bible/Gen+1.

16. Netnotes on Gen 1:28.

trees for construction, and domesticating its animals."[17] "Rule" is a translation of *radah*, "to have dominion, rule, dominate."[18] Theologian and missiologist Christopher Wright states,

> God is passing on to human hands a delegated form of God's own kingly authority over the whole of his creation . . . (and) installs the human species as his image within creation. But that is an authority that finally belongs to God, the creator and owner of the earth . . . human dominion over the rest of creation is to be an exercise of kingship that reflects God's own kingship. The image of God is not a license for arrogant abuse, but a pattern that commits us to humble reflection of the character of God.[19]

The word translated "work" in Genesis 2:15 is *abad*, which means to work or serve.[20] Wright explains that "the essential core of the word still has the sense of serving. Humans are servants of creation, and that is the way they are to exercise their kingship over it."[21] The third responsibility, to "take care," is from the Hebrew word *shamar*, which means to keep, watch or preserve.[22] Wright again sheds light on the meaning: "It means to treat something (or someone) seriously as worthy of devoted attention." Miller compares these last two commands observing, "The former has the sense of stewarding the garden in a way that it grows and increases its yield. The latter has the sense of preserving or protecting from loss. There is, thus, a balance in the assignment between making progress and conserving that which already exists."[23] The medley of words that was employed by the Creator to commission mankind with the management of His creation unveils a wide-reaching scope of responsibilities. The ongoing assignment was a call for

17. Netnotes on Gen 1:28.

18. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "Radah," accessed March 30, 2021, https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7287.htm.

19. Christopher J. H. Wright, *The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission*, Biblical Theology for Life (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2010), 50-51.

20. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "Abad," accessed March 30, 2021, https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5647.htm.

21. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 51.

22. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "Shamar," accessed March 30, 2021, ttps://biblehub.com/hebrew/8104.htm.

23. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 8, Kindle.

mankind to work using their hands and minds for the cultivation of the soil, for the care of the Garden, for mining, for building, and for the preservation of all the created world. They were to exploit the full potential of nature and employ its resources for good.

In addition to serving and preserving the Garden, the first couple must exercise their minds and hearts to name all of the birds and animals. In naming this part of creation "man engages the mind in observation, reason, and categorization and then inflames the heart in creativity and passion."[24] It required investigation, reflection, creativity and word-making to name the animals. In cultivating the soil with hands and cultivating the mind and soul by naming the animals, man was creating culture. Indeed, the word "culture" finds its etymology in "cultivate"; as a verb, "to culture" means "to cultivate."[25] The societal and developmental elements of the Cultural Mandate reveal that the Creator made humankind as His image-bearers to create and cultivate culture. It calls them to harness the natural world, to build, design, compose and create. This call to mankind continues today and is exercised through the vast array of professions and occupations across the globe.

Followers of Christ must comprehend the essential functions that God has given them in the Cultural Mandate. He fashioned mankind for creative, diligent manual and mental labor in order to be culture makers and influencers in society. God created all professions and activities as good, although mankind can choose to use them for evil. Miller concludes his consideration of the mandate affirming, "Clearly, man was made to make culture. That is his primary task. The question is not, Will man make culture? The question is, Will he make good culture or bad

24. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 8, Kindle.

25. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "Culture," accessed March 24, 202, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture.

culture? Will culture be built on kingdom principles or counterfeit principles? Will it contribute to truth, justice, and beauty or to ignorance, corruption, and ugliness?"[26]

For this reason, there is no "secular" work for a disciple of Jesus. All that is done every day either contributes to or detracts from God's purposes. Through the vast array of professions and occupations, He invites all to participate in His work. Christian Overmann encapsulates and applies this creation truth to the professions stating, "We were created in the likeness and image of God so that we could rule over this physical, material world. And when we work, we are putting our likeness of God to work in fulfilling our primary job description."[27] Every believer has a role in fulfilling the God-given mandate using all that the Creator has made and given them. This extensive yet profound conception of God's intent for mankind is crucial in breaking down the false wall of division in the worldview of many by proving that all of creation is good and that all work can be a part of fulfilling the Cultural Mandate.

The Fall: All Is Tainted

In contrast to the first act of God's story, the curtain rises on the second act with a glorious scene of the Garden of Eden reflecting the creativity and glory of the Creator. Although the scene was unimaginably amazing, the plot of the mega-narrative took an abysmal turn as Adam and Eve misused the freedom of choice their Creator gave them and disobeyed His only negative command, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it, you will certainly die" (Gen 2:16-17).

---

26. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 9, Kindle.

27. Christian Overman, *God's Pleasure at Work: Bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide* (Bellevue, WA: Ablaze Publications, 2009), 45.

The consequences of their rebellion were immediate and sweeping. Righteousness was lost, and with it, mankind's relationship to their Holy God was deeply damaged. Their eyes were opened, and they became aware of their nakedness and tried to hide from God (Gen 3:7-8). Now man stands condemned before God (1 Cor 15:22), dead in their trespasses and sins as "children of wrath" (Eph 2:1-3). Sin with all of its devastation had severed man's relationship to the Creator. Physical death would come to all who lived (Gen 3:17). There were particular consequences for women including pain in childbearing (Gen 3:16). The word for pain in birthing is the same as in the next verse where it refers to the pain and toil of cultivating the earth. The word in Hebrew is *'etseb*, meaning pain, hurt, toil, sorrow, labor or hardship.[28] Both childbearing and cultivating the earth would become a hardship. Furthermore, the minds of people had become darkened (Eph 4:8); the enemy had blinded their minds (2 Cor 4:4). Therefore, apart from God's intervention, men and women even today cannot understand and gain divine perspective on reality.

There were also consequences for the rest of creation. The ground was cursed, demanding painful toil and sweat to make it produce food (Gen 3:1-19). Romans 8:22 tells us that all of creation is groaning and in pain. The Greek word used for pain is *sunodino*, which means "together to feel the pains of travail" or, metaphorically, "to undergo agony (like a woman in childbirth) along with."[29] At many levels, nature experiences the pain of sin. Instead of nurturing and caring for creation, mankind with its greed and selfishness has exploited, abused, mistreated and destroyed creation across the planet—air, land and sea. Because of sin, the

28. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "etseb," accessed March 30, 2021, https://netbible.org/bible/Genesis+3.

29. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "sunodino," accessed April 19, 2021, https://biblehub.com/greek/4944.htm.

universal flood recorded in Genesis 6–9 drastically changed the original design.[30] Truly nature is groaning under the weight of the sin and neglect of mankind. The environmental implications of creation care for the believer are beyond the scope of this study but are significant in underlining the all-encompassing nature of God's purposes for man on earth. The physical world is highly important to the Creator.

In summary, the sin of Adam and Eve destroyed mankind's relationship to God (Gen 3:8-9), to self (Gen 3:7, 10), to each other (Gen 3:7, 12, 16) and to the rest of creation (Gen 3:17-19). Christopher Wright offers a succinct summary the effects of the fall:

> *Physically*, we are subject to decay and death, living in a physical environment that is itself under the curse of God. *Intellectually*, we use our incredible powers of rationality to explain, excuse and "normalize" our own evil. *Socially*, every human relationship is fractured and disrupted—sexual, parental, familial, societal, ethnic, international—and the effect is consolidated horizontally through the permeation of all human cultures, and vertically by accumulation through the generation of history. And *spiritually*, we are alienated from God, rejecting his goodness and authority.[31]

The ramifications of a theological comprehension of the fall on the eradication of a dualistic view of life are significant. For the purposes of this study, four will be mentioned. First of all, the entirety of creation is marred by sin. No part is exempt, not even the parts that some dualists consider "spiritual" like praying, preaching or giving. Man is prone to contaminate even these through selfishness, impure motives, pride and other ungodly attitudes and actions. Secondly, the innate goodness of God's created order is not changed. Even though man can use the professions and any activity for evil, God still created it all with a purpose that He has not abandoned. It was intended to bring glory to Him and to serve His purposes.

30. For detailed consideration of the effects of the flood on the earth, see for example Terry Mortenson, "Noah's Flood: A Historical, Global Catastrophe," Answers in Genesis, posted October 10, 2020, accessed April 19, 2021, https://answersingenesis.org/noahs-flood/.

31. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 40.

A third implication of the mankind's sin is the manner in which work has been corrupted. As direct result of the fall, work can be painful, frustrating, stressful, problematical, time-consuming, unpredictable, unproductive and sweaty. Moreover, because work is done by and with other sinners, godless values dominate the workplace, greed drives many, people are used as objects, trust is eroded, conflicts abound, and corruption rears its ugly head. As Timothy Keller eloquently states, "Sin runs through the heart of every worker and the culture of every enterprise. The result is polluted rivers, poor service, unjust compensation, entitlement attitudes, dead-end jobs, dehumanizing bureaucracy, back-stabbing and power grabs."[32] Work in a fallen world is most often not what the Creator intended it to be. Along with the rest of creation, it groans under the weight of sin. All of creation is in need of rescue and yearns for redemption and for reconciliation in all the shattered relationships.

Lastly, it is important to observe that evil resides in the heart of every person. God says, "Everyone rejects God; they are all morally corrupt. None of them does what is right, not even one" (Ps 14:3). Alexander Solzhenitsyn came to the same conclusion in the Russian gulag: "Gradually it came to me that the line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either—but right through all human hearts. This line shifts. Inside us, it oscillates with the years . . . and even in the best of all hearts, there remains . . . an unuprooted [sic] small corner of evil."[33]

---

32. Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2012), 167.

33. Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918–1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation, III-IV* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1974), 615, accessed May 2, 2021, https://archive.org/details/gulagarchipelago00solzrich/page/n5/mode/2up.

Redemption: All Is Reconciled

The third act of God's mega-narrative takes place over the span of the rest of Scripture and continues today. In Jesus Christ, the Creator takes the initiative and fully inserts Himself on center stage of the unfolding human drama to undo all the evil caused by sin. The Messiah came to redeem mankind from sin, to reconcile man to God and to one another, to restore humanity, to resurrect man from death and, ultimately, to restore all things to Himself. All of Christendom affirms that Jesus Christ came to ransom and redeem mankind, to pay the price of our sins on the cross (Matt 20:28; Rom 3:24-26; Eph 1:17). This is foundational to the Christian faith and the basis for restoring the relation of mankind to God and one another.

However, that is not all that His redemption accomplished. Just as the creation and the fall were comprehensive in their reach, so also is the redeeming intervention of the Christ-Creator. Redemption encompasses the whole person and all of creation. Scripture states in Romans 8:19-23 that the whole creation, including our bodies, eagerly anticipates final redemption:

> For the creation eagerly waits for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility—not willingly but because of God who subjected it—in hope that the creation itself will also be set free from the bondage of decay into the glorious freedom of God's children. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers together until now. Not only this, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we eagerly await our adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The Creator was and is attentive to all that He created because it all has been corrupted by sin. He is not just interested in souls, prayers and the inner man, but also in nature and in all of the activities of mankind on earth. He came to redeem it all.

The implication for confronting the false dichotomy under review is the comprehension that God still values all of creation and has a plan for the redemption of all. If God is in the

process of redeeming all of creation, it should all be important to His followers as well. Parts of life cannot be dismissed as not being important to the God of all.

Consummation: All Is Restored

The fourth and final act of the Story is yet to come. The Bible culminates in Revelation 21:1-5a with a vision of what God will do:

> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. And I saw the holy city—the new Jerusalem—descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist anymore—or mourning or crying or pain for the former things have ceased to exist." And the one seated on the throne said: "Look! I am making all things new."

In that day the consummation of God's "Mega-Story" will be a reality. There will be a new heaven and a new earth without sin and death. There will be a restoration of pre-fall reality. All things will be new and in correct relation to God and to each other. The devastation of sin will be annihilated forever, and God's presence and rule will prevail absolutely. This fourth act again affirms God's heart and plan for all parts of human existence.

The Big Story of Scripture is the macro-framework for a biblical worldview. All of life, including the mission of the people of God, must be enclosed within this narrative. When life and mission are taken out of this context, clarity is lost. Allen comments,

> With the divided mindset, much of the church today has a muddled understanding of its mission in the world. The comprehensive nature of God's "big agenda"—the redemption of all things that were broken at the fall—has been lost. Never has there been a time in history when there have been more churches and more professing Christians who are making less of an impact on those around and cultures.[34]

34. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*, 107.

The unbiblical dualism under consideration is challenged at the core by this understanding of the past, present and future of God's Big Story. God wants all of life to be reclaimed for Him. Pearcey sums up this grand view:

> This comprehensive vision of Creation, Fall, and Redemption allows no room for the secular/sacred split. All of creation was originally good; it cannot be divided into a good part (spiritual) and a bad part (material). Likewise, all of creation was affected by the fall, and when time ends, all creation will be redeemed. Evil does not reside in some part of God's creation but in our abuse of creation for sinful purposes (structure versus direction).[35]

Even though the story of Scripture reveals that the sacred/secular divide is not a biblical dichotomy, there are expressions of dualism in Scripture. In order to evaluate SSD biblically, some of the dichotomies in the Word need to be comprehended and contrasted with those of that are not from God. Are these dichotomies the same as the one under review? If not, what are the differentiators?

Wholism and the Dualisms of Scripture

Throughout the biblical text there is a variety of dualism present. Even in the first chapter of Genesis, for example, we see the contrast of darkness and light, a dichotomy that reverberates through both testaments. Other biblical concepts that are placed in tension are heaven and earth, wisdom and foolishness, good and evil, life and death, spiritual and carnal, and things above and things below. Some of these contrasts must be judiciously assessed in order to expose their meaning and compare them to the dualism that truncates the mission of the Church. Before analyzing a few of these contrasting words, an examination of the biblical concepts of "spiritual" and "secular" is advantageous, particularly in comparison to the improper use of these words.

35. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 86.

"Spiritual" and Its Counterparts

In Latin America the terminology used to express the ideas of SSD and describe activities, places and vocations is most often not "sacred" but, rather, "spiritual," in juxtaposition to "secular." A logical starting point then for surveying biblical dualisms is an examination of the Greek word translated "spiritual" along with its opposites. The adjective most used in the New Testament so translated, *pneumatikos*, does not appear in the Gospels, so it is a post-Pentecost word, after the Holy Spirit's coming in Acts 2. Its root is *pneuma* or spirit, which means, "a current of air . . . breath or a breeze; by analogy or figuratively, a spirit . . . the rational soul, mental disposition; an angel, demon or . . . the Holy Spirit."[36] According to Vine's Expository Dictionary, there are eleven related uses of this word, which "always connotes the ideas of invisibility and power."[37] These meanings can be summarized into several observations. It is used for "things that have their origin with God, and which, therefore, are in harmony with His character."[38] It also connotes "the purposes of God revealed in the gospel by the Holy Spirit"[39] and the words by which that revelation is expressed in 1 Corinthians 2:13, or "spiritual songs" in Ephesians 5:19, as well as "spiritual wisdom and understanding" in Colossians 1:9. All those in Christ are together referred to by Peter as a "spiritual house" (1 Pet 2:5). Moreover, believers are given "spiritual blessings" (Eph 1:3) and "spiritual gifts" (Rom 1:11; 1 Cor 12:1; 14:1). The activities of believers toward God are "spiritual sacrifices" (1 Pet 2:5). In 1 Corinthians 15:42-46 Christ's resurrection body is described as "spiritual" in comparison with his "natural," pre-

36. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "Pneuma," accessed April 5, 2021, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?strongs=G4151&t=KJV.

37. Vine's Expository Dictionary, s.v. "Pneumatikos," accessed April 5, 2021, https://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/eng/ved/s/spiritual.html.

38. Vine's, s.v. "Pneumatikos."

39. Vine's, s.v. "Pneumatikos."

resurrection body. In the three verses that follow, the same comparison becomes a "heavenly" and an "earthly" body.

Finally, the only use of *pneumatikos* in reference to evil is to the fallen angelic hosts, specifically, "spiritual forces of evil in the heavens" that war against followers of Christ (Eph 6:12). The term here refers not to their moral quality but to their essence. As the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE) elucidates, "This use of the word has reference to nature, essence, and not to character and moral quality. God, angels, man, devil, demons are in essence *spiritual*. The groundwork and faculties of their rational and moral being are the same."[40] Of significance to dualism, this is the only use in New Testament that has this antithesis of essence. "With the above exception, 'spiritual' in the New Testament signifies moral, not physical antithesis: an essence springing from the Spirit of God and imparted to the spirit of man. Hence, spiritual in this sense always presupposes the infusion of the Holy Spirit to quicken and inform."[41]

Relevant to the analysis of "Evangelical Gnosticism" is the question, who is the spiritual person? Galatians 5 refers to walking in the Spirit (16, 25) and living in the Spirit (25). This passage presents the truth that the believer should be led by the Holy Spirit and exhibit the fruit of the Spirit, not the deeds of the flesh. "Spiritual" is juxtaposed to fleshly or sinful. The same use with nuanced meaning is found in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3. Here "spiritual" is contrasted to "carnal." However, two different terms are used for "carnal." One is *sarkinos* while the other is *sarkikos*. The first means "made of flesh," or "fleshy" or "weak but without attaching any blame

40. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Spiritual," accessed April 5, 2021 https://www.studylight.org/encyclopedias/eng/isb/s/spiritual.html.

41. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Spiritual."

to that condition."[42] In other words, it refers to an immature believer, not long saved, not unlike a baby. The latter word can be translated "fleshly" and denotes immaturity also, "to be characterized by the flesh." However, it is "something that is willful and blameworthy."[43] In other words, this person should be mature or spiritual but, instead, is still acting like an infant in Christ. The first is an immature, newly born believer. The other should be mature but still acts like child. In both cases the spiritual is juxtaposed to the immature.

On the matter of who is a spiritual person, the ISBE concludes, "In the New Testament and general use 'spiritual' thus indicates man regenerated, indwelt, endued, empowered, guided by the Holy Spirit; conformed to the will of God, having the mind of Christ, living in and led by the Spirit. The spiritual man is a new creation born from above."[44] In summary, a "spiritual" person is one who is led by the Spirit of God, walks in the Spirit and exhibits the fruit of the Spirit, not the deeds of the flesh. It is God's will that all believers be spiritual.

This brief overview of the use of "spiritual" in Scripture reveals that it denotes almost exclusively that which is of the Spirit of God. Any action of a Spirit-filled person is spiritual. The opposite is carnal or immature, not led by or of the Spirit. What determines the spirituality of an activity or a profession is not that action or job in and of itself but why and how it is accomplished. "Spiritual" is a moral distinction of intent and practice. While the creation narrative reveals that everything was created intrinsically good for the purposes of God, the fall discloses that everything can be abused for evil. Therefore, it is the intent and use given to particular actions and places that determine its value to God. In contrast, "Evangelical

42. Charles Ryrie, *So Great Salvation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1989), 61.

43. Ryrie, *So Great Salvation*, 61.

44. International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, s.v. "Spiritual."

Gnosticism" inaccurately classifies activities, places and professions as intrinsically "secular" or "spiritual."

"Secular" in the New Testament

To further develop this distinction, it is expedient that the opposite side of the divide, "secular," or its biblical equivalents be considered as well. The term "secular" very rarely appears in any English or Spanish translation of the Bible,[45] so we must begin with a definition in English. A dictionary definition is, "of or relating to the worldly or temporal; not overtly or specifically religious; not ecclesiastical or clerical."[46] This definition is itself an expression of unbiblical dualism as it implies that religion is not applicable to all of life. It finds its etymology in the Latin *saeculum* meaning "the present world or age."[47] The Greek term most used in Scripture that expresses this same idea is *kosmos*. Its literal meaning is "primarily order, arrangement, ornament, adornment,"[48] The word has two principle meanings in the New Testament: "adornment" and "world," the latter with several nuances dependent on the context.[49] In several passages it refers to "the present condition of human affairs, in alienation from and

45. There are only four exceptions that use the word "secular" in translation, three in English and one in Spanish. They are found are Ezekiel 22:26 in the Message paraphrase, 2 Timothy 2:4 in the Douay-Rheims Catholic translation and 1 Corinthians 6:1 in the New Living Translation in English and its Spanish equivalent, Nueva Traducción Viviente. In each case it is a paraphrase and in no instance does it accurately express the original meaning. See https://www.biblestudytools.com/search/?s=bibles&q=secular&t=&c=all.

46. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "secular," accessed April 6, 202, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/secular.

47. Merriam-Webster, s.v. "secular."

48. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, s.v. "world," https://studybible.info/vines/World.

49. "World-Kosmos (Greek Word Study)," Precept Austin, updated July 13, 2016, accessed April 23, 2021, https://www.preceptaustin.org/node/61726.

opposition to God (John 7:7; 8:23; 14:30; 1 Cor 2:12; Gal 4:3; 6:14; Col 2:8; Jas 1:27).[50] Moreover, *kosmos* can refer to the philosophy or way of thinking that is not from God and opposed to Him. On this use of the word in Galatians 1:4, for example, Greek erudite Kenneth Wuest comments,

> Kosmos refers to an ordered system. Here it is the ordered system of which Satan is the head, his fallen angels and demons are his emissaries, and the unsaved of the human race are his subjects, together with the purposes, pursuits, pleasures, practices, and places where God is not wanted. Much in this world-system is religious, cultured, refined, and intellectual. But it is anti-God and anti-Christ.[51]

It is in this biblical sense then that the word "secular" needs to be understood and used by Christians and not the English dictionary definition presented above. It is all that is against God, whether values, ways of thinking, practices or motivations. This understanding of the word *kosmos* confirms that any human activity can be either of this world's system, or it can be "spiritual," according to the definition in Scripture. The difference, again, is how and why it is carried out. In other words, it is either in keeping with God's order for the His creation or following Satan in his rebellion against the Creator. Any profession can be carried out as service to God and for His glory or in service of Satan and according to his antagonistic values. The obvious exceptions are professions that are intrinsically sinful such as killing for hire, prostitution, or any illegal activity. These can never be carried out for the glory of God as they are inherently sinful. Certainly, some activities are also fundamentally sinful and, therefore, "secular" or against God. However, quotidian actions like chores, work, conversation, rest, eating and play are intrinsically good, created by God to be used to glorify Him, but can also be used for selfish pursuit and evil.

---

50. Vine's Expository Dictionary, s.v. "world."

51. Kenneth Wuest, "World-Kosmos (Greek Word Study)," accessed April 7, 202, https://www.preceptaustin.org/node/61726.

The study of these key words leaves us with clear biblical principles on which to evaluate the categorizations proposed by SSD. Intrinsically, all that God created is good, and all that is from Satan is against God and, therefore, evil. Functionally, however, all activities, professions and places are attributed value according to the motivation with which they are engaged and the use they are given. For example, in essence the body is a marvelous creation of God and is good (Ps 139:13-16). However, a person can either use their body to glorify God or as an instrument of sin (1 Cor 6:18-29). In contrast, a dualistic worldview attributes intrinsic value to activities, professions and places based solely on the concept that the physical world is of lesser worth than the world of ideas or anything religious in nature. It does not consider motivation or use. For example, it would affirm that the body is of little importance; all that really matters is the soul. This will be amplified after considering other truths in Scripture.

Other Dualities in Scripture

This critical truth that value is attributed by usage and intent requires verification by a survey of other dualisms contained in the Word of God. Do any of the bifurcations found contradict the above conclusion? Do they shed further light on the distinction? While there are many other dualisms employed in Scripture, three further contrasts will be briefly examined that at first glimpse may seem to support Gnostic dualism: above/below, God/mammon and, finally Mary/Martha.

The first duality to be examined is above/below, which is also expressed as heaven/earth. Colossians urges believers to “keep seeking the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Keep thinking about things above, not things on earth” (Col 3:1b, 2). What exactly are Christ-followers to seek and meditate upon? What are they to avoid and not ponder? Some

would say that the things of the earth are money, work, errands and other daily human endeavors. But, the subsequent verses, Colossians 3:3-10 makes it abundantly clear what the "things on earth" are:

> So, put to death whatever in your nature belongs to the earth: sexual immorality, impurity, shameful passion, evil desire, and greed which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the sons of disobedience. . . . But now, put off all such things as anger, rage, malice, slander, abusive language from your mouth. Do not lie one to another since you have put to death the old man with its practices and have been clothed with the new man that is being renewed in knowledge according to the image of the one who created it.

"The things on things on earth" are obviously sins, not certain areas of life. They are practices that are against God. These evil deeds are juxtaposed to "the things above" which include "mercy kindness, gentleness, patience . . . bearing . . . and forgiving one another . . . love . . . peace" as well as being thankful (Col 3:12-16). Again, it is clear that "things above" are attitudes and actions that are in keeping with the Holy God believers serve. "Earthly things" are sins, not daily actions and work, but how these are carried out. To this end William Barkley comments on Colossians 3:2, "He will, for instance, set giving above getting, serving above ruling, forgiving above avenging. The Christian will see things, not as they appear to men, but as they appear to God."[52] Having God's perspective and attitude on everything in life is to be sought by His people.

Another dichotomy is found in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." Those with a divided worldview would consider money to be

52. William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 150.

evil. Some have even misquoted Scripture saying, "money is the root of all evil,"[53] but 1 Timothy 6:10 says, "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." In the case of Jesus' words in Matthew quoted above, they have a similar meaning. One commentary clarifies:

> The term *money* is used to translate *mammon*, the Aramaic term for wealth or possessions. The point is not that money is inherently evil, but that it is often misused so that it is a means of evil; see 1 Tim 6:6-10, 17-19. Here "money" is personified as a potential master and thus competes with God for the loyalty of the disciple. The passage is ultimately not a condemnation of wealth (there is no call here for absolute poverty) but a call for unqualified discipleship. God must be first, not money or possessions.[54]

The God/money duality, like above/below, is about using something with the correct motivation. Money can be used for the glory of God when believers accept that it is all His, not just ten percent. It can also be the master of believers when they allow the love of money to usurp the place of the Lord, and they use it selfishly. Like all of creation, it is not inherently evil.

The final dichotomy to be considered is Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42. Jesus visits their home and Martha labors to be a great hostess while Mary sits at Jesus' feet. Martha, obviously agitated, asks Jesus if it concerned Him that Mary had left her to do all of the work. The Messiah's answer cuts to the real issue: "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen the best part; it will not be taken away from her." The relevant exegetical questions are: what was the best part that Mary had chosen? Was Martha's work and service for Jesus the problem? What was Martha's problem?

In the Middle Ages in Europe, the life of the common person was considered the way of Martha while the monks were considered to have chosen the way of Mary, the contemplative

53. I have heard this both in Central America and in the United States. Recently it was misquoted in this manner as an argument for a missions agency to not involve itself in investments or business.

54. NetNotes on Matthew 6, accessed April 23, 2021, https://netbible.org/bible/Matthew+6.

life. The Theology of Work Project observes, "Regrettably, this story has often suffered from dubious interpretations, with Martha becoming the poster child for all that is wrong with the life of busyness and distraction, or what the Medieval Church called the active or working life of Martha, which was permitted but inferior to the perfect life of contemplation or the monastery."[55]

The story told by Luke employs three words to describe Martha. The first is "distracted" or *periespato*, which means "to draw away, distract" and metaphorically "to be driven about mentally, to be distracted."[56] Moreover, Jesus said she was "worried and troubled about many things." She was emotionally perturbed or worked up. She was distracted from what was most important. Mary had chosen to take advantage of the Teacher's presence to sit at His feet and to converse, listen and learn. Darrel Bock zeroes in on the difference that Jesus is pointing out:

> This passage is also a key discipleship text—not in the comparison between Martha and Mary's tasks, but in how Martha has wrongly judged Mary's inaction and worries too much about what others are doing [cf. John 21:21]. The text has two distinct emphases: Martha's consumption with assessing others as she performs what she is called to do, and Mary's wisdom in seeking some time at the feet of Jesus. Both qualities, one negative and the other positive, are at the heart of discipleship.[57]

Clearly then this passage is not teaching that contemplation is to be chosen over service. It is emphasizing the importance of attitude. Even service for God can be unspiritual if that labor distracts the person from walking in the Spirit, judgmental attitudes creep in, or the person becomes overly worried and troubled. The problem was not Martha's work, it was her attitude.

---

55. *Bible Commentary*, "Luke and Work," Theology of Work Project, accessed April 24, 2021, https://www.theologyofwork.org/new-testament/luke#mary-and-martha-luke-1038-42.

56. Strong's Concordance, s.v. "Perispao," accessed April 23, 2021, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4049&t=KJV.

57. Darrell Bock, "Luke 10:38-42," in *Luke: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998), accessed April 23, 2021, http://web.a.ebscohost.com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzE1MjQ4MjhfX0FO0?sid=f4989819-bc40-42d8-b042-e2e8d6ee075d@sdc-v-sessmgr01&vid=0&format=EK&lpid=COMM&rid=0.

Moreover, she let the work distract her from enjoying Him. The challenge is to practice the presence of God at all times and take advantage of the opportunities to listen at His feet. If that is done, work will be Spirit-filled and joyful. An insightful interpretation of the story reads:

> Two sisters squabbling about household duties cannot reasonably be construed as a battle of incompatible modes of life. Martha's generous service is not minimized by Jesus, but her worries show that her service needs to be grounded in Mary's kind of love for him. Together, the sisters embody the truth that generosity and love of God are intertwined realities. Martha performs the kind of generosity Jesus commends in Luke 14:12-14, for he is someone who cannot pay her back in kind. By sitting at Jesus' feet, Mary shows that all our service ought to be grounded in a lively personal relationship with him. Following Christ means becoming like Martha and Mary. Be generous and love God. These are mutually reinforcing, as is the two sisters' relationship with each other.[58]

The Mary/Martha duality, just as the others studied, confirms the principle that attitude is paramount. It was not Martha's service itself that was wrong but the attitude with which she was going about her service. A person can engage in good activity, but if it is done with an attitude displeasing to God, it is carnal, not Spirit-led.

The examination of these dualisms in Scripture has shown that the dichotomy proposed by SSD has no biblical basis. It is not matter, the body, or certain professions and places that are intrinsically evil or even inferior but the purpose and attitude with which they are engaged. God has created all things for His glory, but man can use them all for evil. Instead, He calls His followers to be controlled by His Spirit and thus to engage in all of life for His purposes, because Jesus is the Lord of all. But how does His Lordship confront "Evangelical Gnosticism"? The next section investigates the question.

58. *Bible Commentary*, "Luke and Work."

Wholism and a Life of Discipleship

Jesus unmistakably calls His people to be radical disciples, an unmitigated and all-embracing life commitment. True, whole-life discipleship is based on the unyielding foundational truth that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. His call to discipleship is clarified through the identity of the believer, which for the objectives of this study will focus on the priesthood of all believers. This section will survey the foundation, identity and purpose of the life of a disciple of Jesus.

The Lord of All Creation

Scripture unequivocally affirms that Jesus Christ is Lord of all the heavens and earth. On this foundation rests His authority. In the His final words to His followers in the Gospel according to Matthew, the risen Messiah commissions them to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:16-20). But, before giving them orders, He reminds them why He can do that. He asserts unambiguously, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me" (Matt 28:18b). He is truly Lord of all that exists, not only in heaven, but also on earth. There is no part of earth or life over which He does not claim authority. In Colossians 1:18 Jesus is declared to have first place in everything. The Greek word used *proteuo*, which means "to be first, to hold first place, to have preeminence."[59] In other words, He has supremacy over everything.[60]

---

59. Thayer's Greek Lexicon, s.v. "Proteuo," accessed April 24, 2021, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G4409&t=KJV.

60. In understanding the importance of theology and discipleship in all of life, the contribution of pastor, preacher and global leader John Stott in both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries must be acknowledged. He continually challenged the global Church to look to Scriptures for answers to social, economic, political and personal issues. Many of his numerous books, such as *Issues Facing Christians Today, Fourth Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), seek biblical answers to contemporary realities and concerns. He made significant contributions to breaking down the divide and living the Lordship of Christ in all of life.

Because Jesus is Lord, Allen concludes, "This is the greater 'whole' that is to bring unity to our lives. A wholistic life is one lived in complete submission to God, not just in 'spiritual' things, but in everything. If my commitment to the Lord Jesus exists at the very center of everything I do, my life has integrity. My faith unites the parts of my life into a greater whole with all the parts giving glory to God."[61]

While most Christ-followers would agree with this essential truth intellectually, many do not attempt to live as disciples. The danger of a split worldview is the implication that part of life is exempt from the Lordship of the King. This perversion of God's perspective is negatively consequential and must be confronted biblically.

Dutch pastor and statesman Abraham Kuyper often is quoted from a speech he gave at the opening of the Free University in 1880, stressing that all aspects of society and all professions are under Christ's authority. He forcefully concluded, "There's not a square inch in the whole domain of human existence over which Christ, who is Lord over *all*, does not exclaim, 'Mine'!"[62] What he was affirming is that all professions can be carried out under the Lordship of Christ. In the words of James Bratt, one of Kuyper's biographers:

> Over and against any kind of body-soul, nature-grace, fulltime Christian service vs. secular work dualism, Kuyper's words insist that God can—must—be served anywhere and everywhere. (There are) no better jobs or worse jobs before the Lord by how "spiritual" they are. (There is) no writing off whole sectors of culture or society as inherently worldly, or privileging others as inherently good. No more traditional pietist . . . hierarchies.[63]

---

61. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*, 45.

62. James Bratt, "I'm Sick of 'Every Square Inch,'" *Reformed Journal*, October 12, 2013, accessed October 14, 2021, https://blog.reformedjournal.com/2013/10/12/why-im-sick-of-every-square-inch/.

63. Bratt, "I'm Sick of 'Every Square Inch.'"

Entering society in any professions requires that a disciple apply the words of the Master, "If anyone want to become my follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23). The system of this world in every society has values, ideas, behaviors, motivations and attitudes that are contrary to those of Jesus. If they have let their minds be renewed by the Holy Spirit and His Word, His disciples will have views, motivations, attitudes and behaviors that conflict with the world system. That is why Paul says to his protégé Timothy, "Now in fact all who want to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim 3:12). Kuyper knew this from experience, so he could affirm with conviction, "When principles (in society) that run against your deepest convictions begin to win the day, then battle is your calling, and peace has become sin; you must, at the price of dearest peace, lay your convictions bare before friend and enemy, with all the fire of your faith."[64] In stating that "peace has become a sin," he is asserting that a believer must stand their ground, even if it means conflict or persecution in various forms. That is the cost to one who truly follows the Lord of all creation and embraces His worldview, values and attitudes.

The Priesthood of All Believers

In addition to the fundamental anchor of the Lordship of Christ, disciples must comprehend their identity in Christ in order to overcome the sacred-secular divide. The New Testament has numerous descriptors for those who are in Christ Jesus. Although all are important and relevant, for the purposes of this study the focus will be on one attribute, the priesthood of every believer. Israel was first called a "kingdom of priests" (Exod 19:5, 6). Although the whole tribe of Levi were priests, and there was a hierarchy among them, God still

64. Quoted in Os Guinness, *The American Hour: A Time of Reckoning and the Once and Future Role of Faith* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1993), 419.

desired that the whole nation live in holiness before him and represent him before the world. But they did not, and the Israelite priesthood was abolished with Christ's death and resurrection. He is now the Great High Priest who understands His people (Heb 4:14, 15), comforts and anchors them (Heb 6:18-20) and gives them confident access to the Throne of God (Heb 4:16). Now those who are in Christ are "a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5), "a kingdom of priests" (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 5:9) and "kings and priests" (Rev 1:5, 6). Every single person who is in Christ is a priest of God Most High and has a sacerdotal calling.

Scripture reflects numerous privileges and responsibilities for His priests. These include having direct access to God, being the temple of God, living with a mission, and offering acceptable sacrifices. An examination of some of these, along with other key observations, suffices to comprehend the relevance to whole-life discipleship and how it confronts SSD.

Believer-Priests Are Servants of God

First of all, a priest is one who serves God, a minister. In 1 Peter 2:16 Peter reminds his audience of scattered, persecuted Christians, this royal priesthood, that they are "servants of God." That means that every believer is called to serve God with their whole lives, full-time, even if their paycheck comes from a business, a school or a factory. Servant or minister is who they are, not just something that they do when the have the opportunity. The leadership of the Church is instructed in Ephesians 4:12 "to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ." Of course, churches need leadership. Their role is crucial for the functioning of the body. One of their primary roles, however, is equipping the rest of the congregation for the work of the ministry, training them to be unconditional Christians. Those

with a divided mindset only consider pastors, missionaries and such to be ministers while God calls every believer a minister, a servant, and a holy priest.

While one aspect of the ministry of a every believer-priest is to build up the body of Christ to full maturity (Eph 4:12-16), it also includes representing Him before the world, living on mission. They are called to be witnesses to those who do not know Him (1 Peter 2:9-17). How should this witness be carried out? In the past century a debate persisted regarding the relationship between gospel proclamation and social action. Although some in the global Church have now moved beyond that and found some biblical balance, other segments, including the denomination in Honduras that is the subject of this research, continue to value proclamation as the only true and necessary component of evangelism. It is part of the sacred-secular split.

A biblically balanced, ecclesiological missiology encompasses the walk, the works and the words of believer-priests in being witnesses of Jesus Christ and making disciples. This ternary testimony is explained in the epistolary challenge of Peter to the pilgrim Church. A brief examination of 1 Peter 2:9-17 sets forth the importance of this tri-fold testimony. Peter reminds the Church in diaspora that their true identity is not as insignificant, alienated, despised immigrants as is often the case with those who are displaced foreigners. Instead, he reminds them that they are a holy nation, a people of God, a kingdom of priests, servants of God, recipients of mercy, God's special possession and more. They are a people with a purpose, chosen to "proclaim the virtues" of God (1 Pet 2:9), to live holy lives, and to do good works. "Dear friends, I urge you as foreigners and exiles to keep away from fleshly desires that battle against the soul, and maintain good conduct among the non-Christians, so that though they now malign you as wrongdoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God when he appears" (1 Pet 2:11-12). According to this text, it is the walk and words of God's people that will bring the

unsaved to glorify God. He further points out the importance of good works as part of witness in verse 15, "For God wants you to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good." Good works are not simply bait to attract people to hear the Good News; they are an integrated part of healthy communication of His salvation.

In his book *Recovering the Full Mission of God: A Biblical Perspective on Being, Doing and Telling*, Dean Fleming summarizes this very truth with these words:

> How should the verbal and nonverbal dimensions of our mission as God's people connect? This issue is more nuanced than a simple matter of *word* versus *deed*. It's not just a return of the old dichotomy between evangelism and social action that used to frame the debate. It also concerns who we *are* as a people called by God and sent into the world—or *missional identity*. In other words, beyond our specific words and actions, how do we embody the mission of God? The nonverbal aspect of mission involves both who we are *and* what we do . . . (It is) the relationship between *being*, *doing*, and *telling* in the Christian mission.[65]

It is in this biblical balance that disciples find that all of life is mission; all they are, all they do, and all they say communicates something about our Lord, whether it is worthy of His name or unworthy. And at the core, as Peter emphasizes, is the identity of the believer-priest. Mission is not just what disciples do; it is who they are, a kingdom of priests, chosen, loved, redeemed, a people of God, and all for the purpose of living as holy witnesses so others will be attracted to Him.

A final yet crucial reflection concerning believer-priests as servants of God is that there is no spiritual separation between the people of God and leadership. There is no special class. Indeed, there are leaders whose principal task as mature disciples is to model for everyone what it looks like to imitate Christ (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). However, although more mature, these leaders do not have more of the Spirit of God, are not more servants or ministers, and are not a

65. Dean Fleming, *Recovering the Full Mission of God: A Biblical Perspective on Being, Doing, and Telling* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 14.

special, more holy group because of their position. In the New Testament there is no laity as such, neither is there a special class called clergy. R. Paul Stevens, a professor of marketplace theology, observes,

> We look in vain in the New Testament for a theology of laity. There are neither laypersons nor clergy. The word "laypersons" (*laikoi*) was first used by Clement of Rome at the end of the first century but was never used by the inspired apostle in Scripture to describe second-class, untrained and unequipped Christians. It ought to be eliminated from our vocabulary. "Laity", in its proper New Testament sense of *laos*—the people of God—is a term of great honor denoting the enormous privilege and mission of the whole people of God. Once we were not a people at all, but now in Christ, we are "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people (*laos*) belonging to God."[66]

On the other hand, the English word "clergy" comes from the Greek word *kleros*, which means the "appointed or endowed."[67] Stevens comments of this word, "It is used in Scripture not for the leaders of the people but for the whole people. Ironically the church in its constitution is a people without laity in the usual sense of that word, but full of clergy in the true sense of the word - endowed, commissioned and appointed by God to continue God's own service and mission in the world."[68]

Throughout much of the history of the Church there have been two categories of people, those who are "ministers" and those who are not. "Ministry" is mostly understood as what the pastor or priest does. What is needed is that all believer-priests understand they are servants of the Most High, who internally minister to the body of Christ and externally to the world through their redeeming, creating, sustaining work as His ambassadors.

---

66. R. Paul Stevens, *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), chap. 1, Kindle.

67. Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, chap. 1, Kindle.

68. Stevens, *The Other Six Days*, chap. 1, Kindle.

This does not mean that the Church does not need leaders, namely elder-bishop-pastors (the three terms used interchangeably in the New Testament), as well as deacons and deaconesses. These spiritual leaders are to be respected (1 Thess 5:12-13) and are deserving of remuneration (Luke 10:7; 1 Cor 9:9-10) even if some leaders do not accept it. The apostle Paul lived both from the work of his hands as well as from offerings. However, care must be taken to not elevate these leaders to a separate spiritual category that is unattainable for most. One manifestation of "Evangelical Gnosticism" is the unhealthy elevation of local church leaders to a higher spiritual class. It is rampant in many sectors of the global Church and certainly in Latin America. If the people of God do not see themselves as equal priests before God, they will not be free to serve God with abandon in the world.

Believer-Priests Offer Sacrifices

Another responsibility that derives from the priesthood of all believers is that they are to offer sacrifices. Before the cross, animal sacrifices were offered. In contrast, disciples of the Lamb who was slain are "to offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet 2:5). These include praise (Heb 13:15), good works (Heb 13:16), a life of service (Phil 2:17), offerings (Phil 4:18), and people that they lead to Jesus (Rom 15:16). There is one ultimate sacrifice that God asks of His priests that leads to offering the rest. John MacArthur exclaims, "There is one act that is the supreme and all-encompassing and all-affecting act that a believer must do in his life as a true worshiper and that is to offer himself as a living sacrifice."[69] All of the sacrifices listed and more will be a part of believers' lives if the exhortation of Paul to the Romans is lived out, "Therefore, I exhort you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to

69. John MacArthur, "The Believer's Supreme Act of Worship," September 9, 1984, accessed April 25, 2021, https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/45-89.

present your bodies as a sacrifice—alive, holy and pleasing to God—which is your reasonable service" (Rom 12:1). The text gives this sacrifice four qualifiers, two of which will be scrutinized briefly. This sacrifice is to be "living," unlike the ones in the Old Testament that shed the blood of animals. The verse refers specifically to the body, which is where the sinful nature, as well as the will, the mind, emotions and attitudes reside. It implies then the whole person. As one erudite explains,

> that is, "yourselves in the body," considered as the organ of the inner life. As it is through the body that all the evil that is in the unrenewed heart comes forth into palpable manifestation and action, so it is through the body that all the gracious principles in affections of believers reveal themselves in the outward life. Sanctification extends to the whole man (1Thes 5:23, 24).[70]

That means their humanness, mind and will. It implies all that they are, the whole person with their abilities, personality, professions, possessions, dreams, attitudes, will and everything else is given as a living sacrifice. It is all surrendered to His purposes, His rule, and His glory.

A second descriptor is "holy," the same word that Peter uses for the priesthood in 1 Peter 2:5. The Greek word, *hagios*, according to Vine's, comes "from the root *hagnos* (found in *hazo* 'to venerate') fundamentally signifies 'separated' (among the Greeks, dedicated to the gods), and hence, in Scripture in its moral and spiritual significance, separated from sin and therefore consecrated to God, sacred."[71] Thayer adds the nuance "of offerings and sacrifices prepared for God with solemn rite, pure, clean; in a moral sense, pure, sinless, upright, holy."[72] Christopher Wright points out that holiness is a fact, that believers are set apart by God for His purposes, and

---

70. David Brown, *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Commentary on Romans 12*, accessed April 25, 2021, https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/jfb/Rom/Rom_012.cfm?a=1058001.

71. Vine's Expository Dictionary, s.v. "Holiness, Holy, Holily," https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G40&t=KJV.

72. Thayer's Greek Lexicon, s.v. "Hagios," accessed April 27, 2021, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G40&t=KJV.

it is a task, that they are set apart to be different from those who follow the gods of this age.[73] For disciples of Jesus it means that they are set apart to be pure and upright, totally consecrated to God in all that they do, and are molded by God's Word instead of by the world system that surrounds them. Stevens and Lim write about holiness in the context of money saying, "holiness is not separating ourselves from our this-worldly life in matters such as handling money. Holiness is dedicating everything to God and God's purposes. This is the radical message of the New Testament, the message of the kingdom of God." So, it does not imply pulling away from interaction with society. Rather it means to immerse oneself, as Jesus did on earth, yet not to be contaminated by the worldview and values of this world system. Instead, they must be a contrast, like light is to darkness, that shows forth that the God they serve is different and superior.

Much more truth is packed into this statement from Scripture that is beyond the scope of this study of wholism. But the argument is clear: God expects every believer-priest to offer sacrifices of praise to Him. The most crucial sacrifice is the giving of themselves completely to Him, surrendered to His service. This call is not just for certain believers exclusively; it is a call to every believer.

Believer-Priests as the Temple

In the same way that believers are both the priests and the sacrifices, they are also both the priests and the temple of God. Paul tells the Corinthians that their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit who dwells in them (1 Cor 6:19-20). On that basis he calls for glorifying God in their bodies and spirits. Not only are the bodies of individual Christians temples of the Sprit, but also believers together are built up as a spiritual house. Peter states, "So as you come to him, a living

73. Wright, *The Mission of God's People*, 123-24.

stone rejected by men but chosen and precious in God's sight, you yourselves, as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5). Peter informed his audience of immigrant believers that together they were "living stones" and "a spiritual house." The Messiah is identified as the cornerstone (Ps 118:22, 23; Isa 28:16; Matt 21:42) on which the spiritual house is built. Christ is both the cornerstone and the builder; believers are both the building and the materials, the living stones. Paul uses the same construction imagery in Ephesians 2:19-22:

> So then you are no longer foreigners and noncitizens, but you are fellow citizen with the saints and members of God's household, because you have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The term translated here as "temple" is *naos*, which was used for the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, not for the whole temple structure. It was the inner dwelling where the presence of God resided. Now God the Father in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit gives the privilege of being His dwelling place on earth to His sons and daughters, not to any edifice made by man. Together believers are the spiritual house, made of living stones and filled with the Spirit of God.

In Central America it is common to call the church building *el templo*, the temple. The issue with this nomenclature is that it perpetuates an unhealthy dualism and the imagery of Old Testament of a building where the presence of God resides. It is seen as the place for true worship. By inference, He is seen as less present in the rest of society. But since believers are the temple of God, He resides wherever they are—in homes, offices, markets, shops, warehouses, highways, factories and anywhere else they are present. It is imperative that biblical concepts and terminology be employed, or the dualism will persist. It is much more than just semantics. This

applies equally to calling the building where God's people meet *la iglesia*, the church. Biblically, it is His people who are the church, not bricks and mortar. His people are given in Christ the enormous privilege of being His Temple, His Church. It is wrong to give this honor to a building. There is a weak ecclesiology among believer-priests who do not live in full awareness that, wherever they go and whatever they do, they are the holy temple of God and the Church dispersed in the world. An abiding cognizance of this identity and reality destroys the view that some part of the life of the believer-priest is not holy, not set apart for the Creator and His purposes.

The God of All Glory

The life of a disciple of Jesus Christ encompasses every fragment of life. The foundation of a life of radical discipleship is the unyielding foundational truth that Jesus Christ is Lord of all. Furthermore, whole-life discipleship is fleshed out with a comprehension of the priesthood of all believers as a core identity of all who are in Christ. Finally, in order to confront false dualism, it is expedient to examine the ultimate purpose of discipleship, which is the glory of the Triune God.

The glory of God is a constant theme in Scriptures. All of creation shouts the glory of God. Psalm 19:1 seems to bellow, "The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky displays His handiwork," while Isaiah 6:3 roars, "They called out to one another, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven's Armies! His majestic splendor (glory) fills the entire earth!'" God is shouting to mankind through the clouds, the stars, the expanse of the universe and the complexities of microcosms. In Isaiah 43:6b-7 the Creator says to His people, "Bring my sons from distant lands, and my daughters from the remote regions of the earth, everyone who belongs to me, whom I

created for my glory, whom I formed—yes, whom I made." Creation, including man, exists for the glory of Him who is worthy of honor and glory.

Jesus Christ also came to earth to bring glory to the Father. Jesus, the Word made flesh, was full of the glory of God as John proclaims, "Now the Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We saw his glory—the glory of the one and only, full of grace and truth, who came from the Father" (John 1:14). Jesus himself spoke of this doxological purpose in His prayer before being unjustly tried and crucified, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, so that your Son may glorify you—just as you have given me authority over all humanity . . . I glorified you on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me at your side with the glory I had with you before the world was created" (John 17:1-5). In this text we see the Father and Son glorifying each other. If the One whom believers follow lived and died to glorify the Father, how much more His followers should live for the same purpose.

For this reason, Paul exhorts all those in Christ Jesus, "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God" (1 Cor 10:31). Similarly, he tells the Colossians, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col 3:17). Everything in life, every minute of every day, is to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus for the Glory of God the Father. To live for the glory of God connotes living in His presence, before His face. The reformers used the Latin phrase *coram Deo* to remind themselves to live "before the face of God. Reformed theologian R. C. Sproul expands the meaning of this phrase writing, "To live Coram Deo is to live one's entire life in the presence of God, under the authority of God, to the glory of God. To live in the presence of God is to understand that whatever we are doing and wherever we are doing it, we are acting under the gaze of God . . . There is no place so remote that we can escape

His penetrating gaze."[74] Therefore, there is no place and no part of life that is not to be lived for His glory. Sproul goes on to apply this grandiose truth:

> To live all of life *coram Deo* is to live a life of integrity. It is a life of wholeness that finds its unity and coherency in the majesty of God. A fragmented life is a life of disintegration. It is marked by inconsistency, disharmony, confusion, conflict, contradiction, and chaos. The Christian who compartmentalizes his or her life into two sections of the religious and nonreligious has failed to grasp the big idea. The big idea is that all of life is religious or none of life is religious. To divide it between the religious and nonreligious is itself a sacrilege. This means that if a person fulfills his or her vocation as a steelmaker, attorney, or homemaker *coram Deo*, then that person is acting every bit as religiously as a soul-winning evangelist who fills his vocation.[75]

Conclusion

What then is the difference between the dualism of SSD and the dualisms found in the Word of God? What conclusions can be drawn from this biblical overview? As noted above, intrinsically, all that God created is good, and all that is from Satan is against God and, therefore, evil. Functionally, however, all activities, professions and places are attributed value according to the motivation with which they are engaged and the use they are given. Figure 2 below compares the view of those with the sacred-secular divide and what has been revealed in the Word. SSD categorizes professions, activities and places as spiritual or secular, thus attributing an intrinsic value. Scripture, in contrast, teaches that each person choses whether to walk in the Spirit or walk in the flesh as they engage in the professions and activities in every place. All of these are affected by the fall, but all can be redeemed in Christ for the purposes of God.

74. R. C. Sproul, "What Does 'coram Deo' Mean," November 17, 2017, Ligonier Ministries, accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-does-coram-deo-mean/.

75. Sproul, "What Does 'coram Deo' Mean."

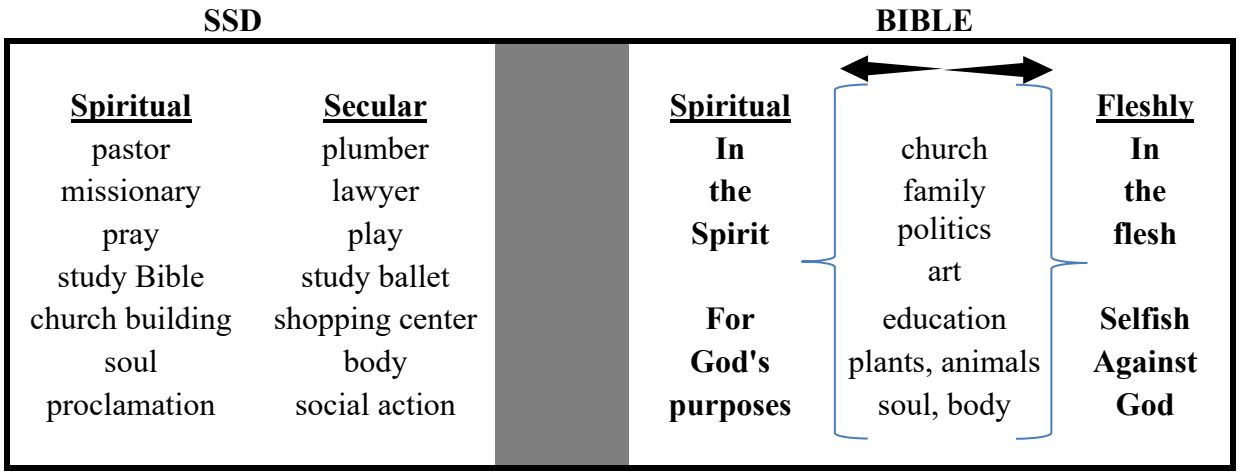

Figure 2. Contrasting Views of Reality

Reformed theology expresses this same biblical truth using the distinctions of structure and direction. "Structure" refers to the way God originally created things, "not just for the primordial creation, but also the latent potential embedded in the creation from the beginning which enables humanity to create new technologies and art."[76] There are two opposing directions that believers can take as to how they engage the structure, namely, fall and redemption. It is not then a matter of just shunning evil, but they must"actively engage in changing the trajectory of those things toward redemption."[77] Figure 3 provides a visual rendering of this biblical bifurcation.

76. Bob Robinson, "Structure and Direction: A Better Paradigm for Cultural Engagement," *Reintegrate* (blog), *Patheos*, May 3, 2013, accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.patheos.com/blogs/reintegrate/2013/05/03/structure-and-direction-better-paradigm-for-cultural-engagement/.

77. Robinson, "Structure and Direction."

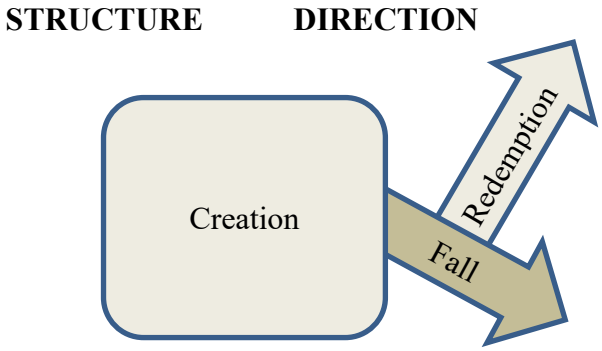

Figure 3. A View of Structure and Direction

Like Figure 2, this graphic makes it clear that believers with such a worldview are continually choosing how to engage society around them and are able to discern where specifically the bifurcation exists within their concrete reality. Beyond that, they decisively move toward redemptive action. Albert Wolters eloquently describes the impact of such a worldview on Christians:

> This twin emphasis makes a radical difference in the way Christian believers approach reality. Because they believe that creational structure underlies all of reality, they seek and find evidence of lawful constancy in the flux of experience, and of invariant principles amidst a variety of historical events and institutions. Because they confess that a spiritual direction underlies their experience, they see abnormality where other see normality, and possibilities of renewal where others see inevitable distortion. In every situation, they explicitly look for and recognize the presence of creational structure distinguishing this sharply from the human abuse to which it is subject. Their sensitivities are everywhere attuned to creation and antithesis, the two foundational realities that the Scriptures so clearly and consistently teach and that the religion of modern humanism so clearly and consistently denies.[78]

This chapter has confronted the sacred-secular divide with a biblical theology of wholism. The limits of this project do not permit an examination of other pertinent themes in Scripture such as the Trinity, the concept of *shalom*, or a theology of vocation. Nor was there

78. Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 58-59.

space to consider a biblical theology of wholism from the perspective of a particular biblical author or book of the Bible. Nonetheless, what has been examined accomplishes the purpose of the chapter. It examined the mega-narrative of the Bible, dualisms in Scripture, and the life of discipleship. Each of these leads to the categorical conclusion that the division of professions, activities and places or any of life into the categories of "secular" and "sacred" is incongruent with Scripture. Dallas Willard concludes likewise:

> There truly is no division between sacred and secular except what we have created. And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and the secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause of Christ. Holy people must stop going into 'church work' as their natural course of action and take up holy orders in farming, industry, law, education, banking, and journalism with the same zeal previously given to evangelism or to pastoral and missionary work.[79]

In a similar manner Pearcey rejoices in the liberation and joy that comes from the freedom of an integrated worldview stating, "This holistic vision can be wonderfully liberating . . . This same liberating experience can be available to all of us, as we shed dualistic thinking and embrace a holistic Christian worldview."[80]

The Church in Honduras, as well as in other latitudes and longitudes, needs to be confronted with the theology of wholism from the Word of God in order to develop a biblical worldview that contemplates all of life as belonging to God. Such a way of thinking indeed liberates believers to serve God with all of life and will move disciples from passivity toward culture to incarnational, redemptive action. It will free them to serve God in all sectors of society and in all the world to make His name famous and to draw other to Him.

---

79. Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines-Reissue: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1999), 214.

80. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 87.

CHAPTER 4

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although the topic of the sacred-secular divide has become more widely discussed in the past two decades, there are relatively few works that delve deeply and broadly into it. Yet there are quite a few authors that include this dualism in their writings. In order to review some of the more salient sources, the approach will be to consider how various authors deal with understanding SSD, with the roots of this worldview, and with a biblical/theological response to this form of dualism.

Understanding SSD

In order to engage with the divide at a meaningful level, it is necessary to comprehend exactly what it is and how it is manifest in the life of the Church and its members. The writer has consulted a large number of printed and electronic resources to capture the broader history, background, and grounded realities of SSD. For purposes of this chapter, four have been chosen. They provide the most relevant information as well as probing the implications of SSD.

Perhaps the author that has dealt most broadly and deeply with this erred worldview in Christendom is Darrow Miller, a disciple of Francis Schaeffer. He is the co-founder of the Disciple Nations Alliance and a featured author and speaker. His book that goes most deeply into explaining SSD is *LifeWork: A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day* that he wrote with Marit Newton. It was written a decade after his seminal work, *Discipling Nations*, and is intended to assist believers in understanding their role in what God proposes for the world. He does not attempt to write a scholarly work. In fact, by his own admission, he is not a scholar. In

one of his blogs, he affirms of his time with Schaeffer, "at L'Abri I acquired the skill of helping common folks like myself better understand what Schaeffer and other thinkers were saying. I did not have an intellect like Schaeffer, nor the intelligence and scholarship of L'Abri friends like Os Guinness, Charles Thaxton or Nancy Pearcey. But I could make their teaching and writing accessible to the common man."[1]

Therefore, Miller's work is accessible. At the same time, it does not lack depth or careful thought, despite his self-deprecation. His work in numerous countries and interaction with leaders of many cultures on the topic at hand add color, nuance and universal practicality to his proposals.

Miller's primary contribution to understanding SSD is his insistence that it is a worldview issue. He begins by stating that one's answers the questions of what work really is and why we do it "ultimately are determined by one's worldview. Our worldview determines how we see the world, the kinds of lives we live, and the kinds of societies we create."[2] He compares three worldviews and how these assumptions determine a person's view of work. The first is materialism or secularism, which denies a spiritual reality. The purpose of work becomes to consume. "In this paradigm, man has no intrinsic worth. . . . Our value as human beings is determined by what we have."[3] People end up sacrificing their spiritual identities, their families and their friendships for success in the marketplace and can be willing to do most anything to get ahead. And that success is defined in terms of moving up in position, accumulating money, and power for the purpose of consuming more.

---

1. Darrow Miller, "Discipling Nations: A Critique and Response, 2 of 6," March 5, 2018, *Darrow Miller and Friends* (blog), http://darrowmillerandfriends.com/2018/03/05/discipling-nations-critique-response-2/.

2. Darrow Miller, *LifeWork: A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2009), chap. 1, Kindle.

3. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 1, Kindle.

Miller's verdict is accurate: "Falling short of God's intentions, work in the West is largely utilitarian and self-serving; money, power, leisure and self-fulfillment are the goals. Hedonism reigns."[4] As a result, people's worth is determined by their performance in the marketplace, and they live in dissonance with God's purposes.

A second worldview Miller dissects is animism, forms of which are embodied by millions around the globe. In this view, spirits animate nature. Humankind is no longer morally responsible as they are left in the hands of fate. Work is seen as a curse that only compounds man's misery and is necessary only because without it one does not survive. The author points out that even in Western, materialistic culture, work is often perceived as a curse, something that is loathed but must be endured to survive.

Animism is present in Central America, as was explored in the study of the roots of this dichotomy. Its influence is both through the Spanish conquerors as well as from the Mayan forefathers. A treatment of this malady in Honduras and elsewhere must consider this worldview and address it effectively.

Finally, Miller presents the unbiblical dualism of Evangelicalism as an unbiblical worldview. "The modern evangelical church, instead of providing a worldview that will challenge the tragic impoverishment of the animistic and materialistic paradigms, has largely withdrawn from public life and abandoned the culture and the marketplace."[5] He points out that in the workplace this aberration takes on two forms. The first is a desire for a higher calling, to leave the "secular" arena and be "in ministry." The second concept found among evangelicals is that the mature believer will seek to carry out "spiritual" activity to the workplace, particularly

4. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 1, Kindle.

5. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 1, Kindle.

Bible study or prayer meetings or evangelism. That is seen as the way to bring the higher, spiritual realm into the lower secular realm. Miller also observes this dichotomy in deployment, where working overseas as a missionary is a higher deployment. Of SSD he concludes,

> All of this teaching is a reflection of an unbiblical paradigm that has left individuals mere shadows of what God intends, the church largely disengaged from culture, communities mired in poverty, and nations undiscipled. There has never been more Christians or churches than there are today . . . (The church) has forgotten its function of being salt and light in society, of bringing the kingdom of God to life and light in the everyday street and marketplace . . . In forgetting this the church has become largely impotent.[6]

Miller's assessment is especially helpful in his description of the practical ramifications and manifestations in the Evangelicalism. It was beneficial for identifying key measurements of SSD in developing the questionnaire. His treatment of animism is also unique in its contribution to its view of work.

A second contribution to comprehending this dualism comes from Nancy Pearcey, another disciple of Schaeffer. In her award-winning book *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*, the author also addresses the sacred-secular divide as a worldview issue. However, she approaches it from a more philosophical perspective than Miller. "Many believers have absorbed the fact/value, public/private dichotomy, restricting their faith to the religious sphere while adopting whatever views are current in their professional or social circles."[7] She laments that most who profess to follow Christ "have no biblical worldview for interpreting the subject matter of their field."[8] In the same vein as Miller, she lays out the tension of believing professors on university campuses in North America who have "accepted a trade-

6. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 1, Kindle.

7. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008), 33.

8. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 34.

off: So long as we're allowed to hold our Bible studies and prayer meetings, we've turned over the *content* of the academic fields to secularists."[9]

Pearcey is also deeply concerned with the practical ramifications of philosophy; in fact, that is precisely why it disquiets her. It is well to remember her words quoted in chapter 1 of this study:

> The dichotomies we have been talking about—secular/sacred and public/private—are not merely abstractions. They have a profoundly personal impact. When the public sphere is cordoned off as a religion-free zone, our lives become splintered and fragmented. Work and public life are stripped of spiritual significance, while spiritual truths that give our lives the deepest meaning are demoted to leisure activities, suitable only for our time off. The gospel is hedged in, robbed of its power to "leaven" the whole of life.[10]

The author's intent with her work is precisely to free God's people from a worldview that holds them hostage. She clearly details the detrimental outcomes of permitting cultural influences to lull believers into perceiving a bifurcated cosmos.

A third writer that seeks to help his audience understand the divide is Christian Overman, the founder of Worldview Matters. His working definition of worldview includes five components. He defines it as "a 'big picture' of reality shaped by conscious beliefs or sub-conscious assumptions about God, creation, humanity, moral order and purpose."[11] He is so convinced of the importance of a biblical worldview that he has committed his life to serving in forming it in others in order to counteract the influence of non-biblical philosophies on believers in North America and around the world. Whereas Miller focuses on secular, animistic and Evangelical worldviews and Pearcey on Western philosophy, Overman in his book *God's*

---

9. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 37.

10. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 65.

11. Christian Overman, *God's Pleasure at Work: Bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide* (Bellevue, WA: Ablaze Publications, 2009), 23.

Pleasure at Work: Bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide describes more fully what the makeup a worldview is. He explains each of the five components of a worldview that are mentioned in his working definition and gives examples of how these are lived out. He then presents two examples, Hinduism and humanism and outlines their perspective on each of the five components that he proposes are present in any worldview.

With this context he then presents his comprehension of SSD, claiming it is "one of the most troublesome counterfeits in Western history."[12] He defines it as an insidious way of thinking that most don't even know it is part of them or has a name. Although Overman states that it is not easy to define, he simplifies it by explaining that "generally, it divides reality into two distinct compartments, with a wide gap between. Dualism divorces science and religion . . . our public life from our private lives . . . the material world from the spiritual world . . . the body from the soul . . . 'facts' from 'values' and . . . " 'secular' from 'sacred.'"[13]

As the title of the book announces, Overman's principal concern is how worldview affects work, in particular the manner in which this dichotomy perverts the perception and practice of work for so many believers. For the other authors, this is their focal concern as well. Understanding and bridging the divide brings wholeness, purpose and meaning to the everyday labor of God's people.

A fourth author that seeks to explain the dichotomy is Scott D. Allen in his book *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide: A Call to Wholistic Life and Ministry*. His elucidation of this dualism explores the basics of Western and Eastern thinking as contrasted with what he calls "Biblical Wholism." Although certainly a generalization, his comparison is enlightening in revealing gaps

12. Overman, *God's Pleasure*, 32.

13. Overman, *God's Pleasure*, 32.

in both philosophical latitudes as compared to biblical thinking. He then applies it to life, in particular to the dangers of compartmentalizing life in private and public spheres. He uses Nazi Germany as an eloquent example of an extreme of this division that put God in a box labeled "Private Beliefs."[14] While his explanation of the divide is briefer than that of the other authors, his contributions of comparing dualism to wholism and East to West are helpful in clarifying dualism.

The Roots of SSD

In order to comprehend the origins of dualism in Honduras, it was necessary to investigate four potential causes of this malady as expounded in chapter 2. Because there are four converging streams, it is important to consider multiple sources of information as no one author considers all four of them. This section will consider the influences in Central America from the West, from the Mayan world, from the Spanish conquest and from Protestant Evangelicalism in Central America. In all nine sources will be contemplated as to their contributions to comprehending the origins of the sacred-secular divide.

Influences from Western Philosophy

The majority of authors on the subject are from the West and focus almost exclusively on this stream of influence. Nancy Pearcey addresses this source of SSD in *Total Truth* in a more thorough manner than other sources, beginning with Plato and his philosophy of Matter and Form that defined the material world as of less value and to be avoided. She reflects on the contributions of Augustine, who was influenced by the platonic philosophy, Thomas Aquinas,

14. Scott D. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide: A Call to Wholistic Life and Ministry* (Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2011), 35.

and, later, René Descartes, who introduced the idea that reason is the source of truth, independent from philosophy or religion. Aquinas defined the split as nature and grace and purported spiritual elitism. The author then delves into the Reformers attempts to overcome the god of reason and their insistence on divine Revelation in Scripture as being absolute truth over all of life and illuminating all areas of study.

A blind spot for Pearcey, however, is her assertion that this dichotomy is a problem only in the West. She cites Leslie Newbigin, a British theologian and missiologist who worked for decades in India, who argued that most religions in Asia and Africa are a whole worldview or way of understanding all of the human experience.[15] She concludes that "on a global scale . . . the secular/sacred dichotomy is an anomaly—a distinctive of Western culture alone."[16] Both Newbigin (a significant surprise for this writer) and Pearcey ignore the dualism present in other religions. While it is true that many other faiths see all life as spiritual, Miller, for example, points out that both Hinduism and Buddhism understand "reality as eternal, spiritual monism, the absolute spirituality of all things. According to this worldview, the spiritual realm is real, while the physical is a nonrational illusion of mystery."[17] There is a dichotomy after all.

Paul R. Stevens and Clive Lim in their book *Money Matters* argue that Korean Christianity is highly dualistic. They show that Korean Shamanism had a clear hierarchy of gods. It is argued that in many Evangelical denominations there the pastors are considered "supernatural people who have the special ability to intercede with God."[18] The authors go on to

15. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 69.

16. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 69.

17. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

18. R. Paul Stephens and Clive Lim, *Money Matters: Faith, Life, and Wealth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021), 52.

argue that Buddhism and Confucianism also influenced dualistic thinking in Asia. Their primary argument is worth considering: dualism is present across the world due to a range of influences, including other faiths and philosophies.

Secondly, Pearcey ignores the sway of the West on much of the rest of world through imperialism, globalization, Evangelical missions, and mass media, among other means of shaping thought. The research conducted in this project clearly proves she is wrong in limiting the issue to the West. At least in Honduras and probably among Evangelicals globally, as well as many cultures, the malady is clearly present. Mark Greene, for example, affirms of SSD, "I am convinced – given (our) international connections—that this is not just a critical concern in the West, . . . but a vital issue for the Church globally. . . . There is an urgent need to avoid the mistakes of the Western church."[19] A separate issue would be to study its presence outside of the Church, in the culture in general. However, as seen in chapter 2, the roots of SSD, at least in Central America, run deeper than just the Evangelicalism. Both the Mayan religion and the Spanish Counter-Reformation had significant influence on the worldview of society at large, and both have elements of dualism, even if not precisely the same dualism to which Pearcey refers. The Spanish *conquistadors* arrived in Latin America with Greek dualism intact, without the wholism that the Reformation sought to restore.

Darrow Miller also traces the Greek origins of this dichotomy. He adds a valuable discussion of Gnosticism and its sway on the early Church. He then traces the display of dualism in the monasticism of the Middle Ages with its focus on rejecting the world and withdrawing from it in order to pursue "the things of God." Acknowledging the positive influences of monasticism on literature, the preservation of Scripture and the spread of Christianity in Europe

19. Mark Greene, *The Great Divide* (London, UK: London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, 2010), 5.

and later the globe, Miller nonetheless points out the persistence of dualism in this movement. The most noted example is in the writing of Eusebius, who in *Demonstration of the Gospel* teaches that God gave two ways of life to the Church, one above nature and common human living and devoted to serving God and another humbler and more human. The latter was for trading and farming and other types of necessary human labor. These Eusebius deemed "a secondary grade of piety."[20] There was a perfect, contemplative life and a permitted, lower, active life to which most were relegated. This is the clergy/laity split that is observed in most of Christendom today.

Miller delves into the Reformation more than other sources, particularly highlighting their view of wholism, work and the vocation or calling of every believer. He states that "in sum, the Reformers argued two main points. First, all Christians, not just religious workers, have a calling. Second, all work, not just spiritual work, can be considered a calling. The sacred-secular dichotomy is abolished for those who embrace this biblical thinking."[21] It should be pointed out that here Miller contradicts himself. By saying "not just spiritual work," he is saying that some work is spiritual, and some is not, a contradiction of what both he and the Reformers claimed. To give him the benefit of the doubt, he likely meant the so-called "spiritual" work according to those with dualism.

Hugh Whelchel reviews specifically the history of viewpoints on work and calling in his book *How Should We Then Work?: Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work*. He appraises the view of work of the Greeks, Hebrews, early Christians, Medieval Church, Reformation, and finally, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' perspective. While he does not address the

20. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

21. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

whole of the sacred/secular divide, he does deal with a core element that deeply affects how believers live. His explanation of the difference in the conception of work between the Greeks and Hebrews along with that of the early Church is particularly beneficial. The Old Testament highly values work of all types, even menial labor. Jewish teachers were expected to have their own trade, not to live off the contributions of their students, as was the case with Saul of Tarsus. Paul taught by example and word this high view of work and often encouraged believers to work well (Col 3:23-24; 1 Thess 4:11-12).

Whelchel then follows the same historical development of the other authors, noting the theology expressed by Eusebius of the superior *vita contemplativa* and the inferior, yet permitted, *vita activa*. This was followed by Augustine as well. The author traces the view of work through the medieval church and the radical change that came with the Reformation.

Another contribution is his consideration of the last two centuries of the second millennium. He makes a unique addition to the subject in considering the influence of Marxism and capitalism on work. He observes that, while regarded as opposites, both "see the pursuit of a vocation as an end in itself."[22] Both motivate those that work to find their personal fulfillment and identity through their work, making it an idol. In the end neither system can make good on their promise of bringing significance from work. To Whelchel's analysis it should be added that, while both systems seek a particular integration of all of life, they see all reality as material with no need for a higher purpose. Both make unnecessary a spiritual dimension to life and work. There is no wholism but rather a negation of the spiritual by Marxism and a sequestration from it by capitalism.

22. Hugh Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work?: Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work* (McLean, VA: Institute for Faith, Work and Economics, 2012), 67.

Influences from the Mayan World

In order to comprehend the basic components of Mayan religion, thought and culture, several sources were consulted. The first was *Historia de Guatemala* (*History of Guatemala*) by Francis Polo Sifontes. He affirms the common understanding of Mayan worldview that the gods were related to all of life; deity, nature and humanity are intertwined. The contribution to comprehending the roots of dualism is in his explanation of social order. This could be referred to as social duality. The Mayan priests were the keepers of esoteric knowledge, science, and the sophisticated calendar that ruled their lives.[23] They had access to the gods that the common people did not. So, the concept of only a certain, special class of people having true knowledge and access to the gods has deep roots in Mayan lands even today. The priesthood of all believers is a foreign concept because it destroys the dividing wall of social dualities.

One of the most complete works on the religious world of Latin America comes from Pablo A. Deiros in *El Mundo Religioso Latinoamericano* (*The Latin American Religious World*). The first part of his tome explores the ancient religious systems of the continent. He explains pre-Columbian religion in general, followed by a treatment the religion of each of the regions, including the Mayans and Aztecs in Mesoamerica. Several observations are noteworthy. First, he points out that many of the Amerindian religions were shamanistic, which included esoterism that can be found in the culture of temples in Central America.[24] This focus on sacred places that hold special power or closeness to deity was of course confirmed by the Spaniards, who often built Roman Catholic church buildings on top of the sites of ancient Amerindian temples. The

23. Francis Polo Sifontes, *Historia de Guatemala: visión de conjunto de su desarrollo político-cultural* (Leon, Spain: Editorial Evergráficas, 1988), 52-55.

24. Pablo A. Deiros, *El mundo religioso latinoamericano* (El Paso, TX: Editorial Mundo Hispano, 2017), 80-81.

concept of believers themselves being the temple of God is a complete paradigm shift for those of this background.

Deiros also calls attention to an Amerindian worldview duality. The universe and self were considered dual in nature. Every human being has a physical side as well as a supernatural side. This duality was seen as manifested, for example in good/evil, light/darkness, and male/female.

Finally, Deiros alludes to what can be called a moral duality that is better explained by Alfonso Moises in "Religion in Mesoamerica." The Mayan gods could be both good and evil.[25] Not even the gods could be trusted. There was no contradiction then between being religious and doing evil. Even though there was a belief in a positive afterlife for those that did good and one of suffering for those that did evil, there was a disconnect at the highest level (the gods) between religion and moral behavior.

Influences from the Spanish Conquest

The most complete discussion of the impact of the Counter-Reformation in Spain and, through the *conquistadores* on Latin America comes from the prolific Spanish author César Vidal Manzanares, specifically *La Herencia del Cristianismo: Dos Siglos de Legado* (*The Heritage of Christianity: Two Centuries of Legacy*). The author defines numerous legacies for Latin America from the Spaniards, four of which are found to be reflected in SSD. The first is a negative view of work. The fundamental societal change in Protestant Europe through the supremacy of Scripture with its biblical view of vocation and work never arrived in Spain nor its

25. Alfonso Moises, "Religion in Mesoamerica," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* vol. 2, no. 8, Special Issue (April 2012): 24, accessed March 9, 2021, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272740466_Religion_in_Mesoamerica.

colonies.[26] In its place they were left with a Greek conceptualization that valued leisure and devalued work, particularly manual labor. Even today these permeate the worldview of much of Latin America.

A second legacy from the Spaniards was the educational divide. It was the Catholic missionaries that brought literacy and formal education to Latin America. However, only the elite had access to education. This caused a great divide between the religious elite of the Roman Church and the common people. It exacerbated the rift between religion and the everyday life of the people.

Thirdly, the Counter-Reformation left behind the idea that those in authority are above the law. The Reformation taught the supremacy of the law over everyone, including the rulers. By contrast, in European nations that were not influenced by this reform, all were not equal before the law. Those in power were often above the law. So, like the Mayan gods, the governmental and religious authorities could get away with breaking the law because they were the law. This both created a gulf between religious leaders and normal citizens as well as legitimized hypocrisy. One could be very religious yet immoral at the same time.

Lastly, Vidal Manzanares points to the inheritance of the concept of venial sins, which, much like the previous legacy, justified hypocrisy and a double moral standard. The justification of both lying and lack of respect for personal property as merely venial sins has led to cultures of systemic corruption and lack of public transparency. The divorce of religion from quotidian morality was again exemplified by those in authority.

In his classic work *The Other Spanish Christ*, John McKay acknowledges a final legacy of the Spaniards which is bellicose evangelism. They arrived on the new continent with the Bible

26. César Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia del Cristianismo: dos milenios de legado* (Tyler, TX: Editorial JUCUM, 2014), 155.

in one hand the sword in the other.[27] The chasm between proclamation and practice was enormous.

Influences from Protestant Evangelicalism

A significant contribution by Miller is his treatment of the Pietist movement that arose two centuries after the Reformation. It encouraged believers to withdraw from the wider culture and focus on the "spiritual realm," or devotional life. The Evangelical movement in North America is largely descended from this movement and contributed to the idea of a bifurcated worldview and life. Miller also traces dualism through the Enlightenment and the Great Awakening. The latter was quite comprehensive in its view of life and faith that lead to civil action. He calls these First Inheritance evangelicals, who, like William Wilberforce in England, William Carey in India, and many others set out to change culture and, in many cases, did so.

Miller then presents the secular humanism of the modern era, which only recognized the secular. He points out the Church's response was doubly problematic. He explains, "The first (response) was to accommodate the new secular paradigm, and the second was to reject it and adopt an ancient Greek paradigm. The church was divided."[28] The first group included the "Liberals," who made reason their god and the reactionary "Fundamentalists," who, instead of defending a biblical worldview, turned to a dualistic paradigm that separated the physical from the spiritual realm. The latter was deemed sacred while the physical was considered profane or secular. Thus, these Second Inheritance evangelicals no longer sought to change culture but, instead, focused on the end times, the imminent return of Christ and the need to save as many as

27. John A. MacKay, *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in The Spiritual History of Spain and South America* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 33.

28. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 2, Kindle.

possible from an eternity without Christ. The ship was seen as sinking fast; don't try to save the ship, just throw out life vests to save as many as possible.

Scott Allen includes an appendix on the history of SSD in *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*. Besides the influences already mentioned, he acknowledges the spreading of this dualism around the globe by fundamentalist Evangelical missionaries. "These missionaries," he explains, "went with great zeal and made incredible sacrifices for the cause of Christ. Yet many were infected with a Gnostic mindset, which they passed on to indigenous believers through the churches that they planted. The missionaries associated any missionary activity outside of evangelism and church planting with the Social Gospel Movement."[29]

Allen addresses the separation of social action from Gospel proclamation. He points out the failure in both the United States and Haiti of investing billions to alleviate poverty. He attributes the failure totally to ignoring the clear biblical truth that people are broken and in need of a Savior. While this is true and is a desperate need, he ignores other root causes, particularly the difference between aid and true development. A wholistic approach to alleviating poverty seeks to develop the whole person, not just give handouts.

Allen also speaks to separating proclamation from social action, which was the reaction of fundamentalist Evangelicals to the Social Gospel Movement. This overreaction to Liberalism devalued seeking any social improvement in society other than "saving souls." Any social outreach that did occur was only justified by serving as bait for evangelism. This, according to Allen, has "led to a proliferation of churches around the world today that are characterized by

29. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*, 104-5.

superficiality. . . . (They are) culturally impotent and marginalized, making little or no impact on their surrounding society."[30] The effect of the divide is evident.

It is crucial to point out here that the Western missions movement took with it an abbreviated version of Reformation Theology. While *sola scriptura, sola gratia* and *sola fides*, the firm foundations of the Reformation, were widely taught and adhered to, their understanding and theology of the people of God in society was, by and large, not taken globally. Thus, as Cesar Vidal Manzanares argues, a truncated view of work and faith, of vocation and service and of law and government became the unspoken and unrecognized forces that forged the most significant dimensions of SSD.[31]

A Theological Response to SSD

Six sources were particularly beneficial in providing a biblical answer to the sacred/secular dichotomy. The most sensible starting point is Darrow Miller's writings because his contain the most complete biblical response. In fact, the subtitle of his book *LifeWork* is *A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day*. This section will review Miller's primary foci and add input from other sources before indicating some themes that he did not address, but others did. Finally, some relevant biblical content that none of these authors tackled will be mentioned.

30. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*, 106.

31. Vidal Manzanares, *La Herencia*, 156-58.

The Lordship and Kingdom of Christ

Miller begins his biblical rejoinder to what he calls "Evangelical Gnosticism" with a chapter on the Lordship of Christ and Kingdom of God. He uses the Parable of the Minas in Luke 19 to explain what the Lord taught His disciples about the Kingdom. Jesus challenges them with "a theology of action."[32] In contrast, the author asserts that much of Christianity has developed a theology of passively waiting for the return of Christ. In contrast, the parable of the ten minas is a call to a life of faithful occupation until He returns. Miller defines the minas as capital that includes "one's natural talents, abilities, interests, . . . temperament . . . spiritual gifts . . . and 'every spiritual blessing in heavenly places.'"[33] This seems to be a limited interpretation of minas and out of sync with the rest of what Miller teaches. Hugh Whelchel in *How Should We Then Work?* does a much better job of defining talents in the parable from Matthew 24 that is very similar to the mina parable of Luke 19. He explores the definitions of at least ten scholars before concluding that "talents" most likely represents everything that God has given the believer, including possessions, opportunities, abilities, and blessings. "Whatever the Lord gives us, He will ask us about later."[34] Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens affirm that, however defined, talents or minas are "creational, deriving from the creative activity of God, who invites us through their use to be co-creators with God to make God's world work and to build up the body of Christ."[35]

---

32. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 4, Kindle.

33. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 4, Kindle.

34. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work*, 52.

35. Robert Banks and R. Paul Stevens, *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 1000.

Miller explains that the command by the Christ is *pragmateuomai*, which means "to trade or do business or occupy."[36] "The task given by Christ to His disciples is very basic: it is to *pragmatically* use the natural and spiritual capital he has given us to engage our cultures and world for Christ and his Kingdom. . . . Our call is to be creative, practical, industrious, energetic, active and diligent with the 'capital' he has given us."[37]

The Big Story

A second theme that Miller unpacks is what he calls "the essential metanarrative."[38] He breaks the story of Scripture into four stages: creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. Nancy Pearcy develops this theme in her magnificent attempt to liberate Western Christianity from cultural captivity. She includes the first three stages but does mention that others include a fourth called "restoration" or "glorification". Whelchel includes the fourth "chapter," as he calls it, and uses for it the nomenclature "restoration."[39] The addition of the fourth stage makes for a more complete story as it provides the ending that concords with the beginning. It is the fulfillment of history toward which mankind is moving and clarifies the purposes of God in history. Each of these authors affirm the value of this overview in confronting the divide. It clearly manifests Jehovah's purpose to redeem all of creation, not just selected parts.

A critical aspect of the story in the creation narrative is the Cultural Mandate that Pearcey, Miller and Whelchel each address. The Creator gave mankind mandates regarding His

36. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 4, Kindle.

37. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 4, Kindle.

38. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 7, Kindle.

39. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work*, 8.

creation, specifically to subdue and rule it, to be fruitful and fill it, to care for it. These authors share comparable conclusions as to its importance. Pearcey words it persuasively concluding that "the ideal human existence is not eternal leisure or endless vacation – or even a monastic retreat into prayer and meditation – but creative effort expended of the glory of God and the benefit of others. Our calling is not just to "get to heaven" but also to cultivate the earth, not just "save souls" but also to serve God through our work."[40]

God Himself gives the example of working creatively and intensely for six days and greatly enjoying His work (Gen 1 and 2). Mankind is to steward His creation for His glory. Jesus exemplified the value of manual labor in His years of work as a carpenter with His earthly father (Mark 6:3). Jeff Van Duzer in *Why Business Matters* does an excellent job of dissecting the Genesis account and laying bear God's purposes for human flourishing. He argues convincingly that "we are also called to glorify God by engaging in the work we have been called to undertake."[41] He goes on to explain:

> One aspect of these tasks was to involve Adam and Eve in partnering with God to cause the land to bring forth its crops so as to provide for the material well-being of God's people and the created order. In the performance of these tasks, Adam and Eve advance God's agenda and thereby give God glory. Collectively, these activities enable tie community to flourish as God intended.[42]

Therefore, one of the primary values of the Big Story for a theology of wholism is that the identity and mission of God's people is clarified. "Our identity as God's people comes from

40. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 48.

41. Jeff Van Duzer, *Why Business Matters to God: (And What Still Needs to Be Fixed)* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 38.

42. Van Duzer, *Why Business Matters*, 39.

our missional role in the Biblical story," states Whelchel, "which is not future, but in the here and now. By recovering Scripture's storyline, we rediscover our true identity."[43]

A Theology of Vocation

While Miller deals with the issue of calling and vocation from the perspective of all of life (therefore his title, *LifeWork*), Whelchel presents a more robust theology, in part because he is dealing specifically with work in his book as opposed to all of SSD. Whelchel wrestles with the difference between calling and work. He appeals to the Reformers and others that understand the primary call of all believers is to salvation and holiness that must be understood to encompass all of life. A secondary calling or vocational calling is the call to God's service in our work.[44] He argues that there are other secondary callings in realms such as family, society, and church. With regard to vocational calling, Whelchel follows the lead of the Reformers in defining vocational calling as "the call to God and to His service in the vocational sphere of life based on giftedness, desires, affirmations, and human need. Vocational calling is usually stable and permanent over a lifetime."[45] It is the means by which one offers himself to God. A person may have different jobs or even careers, but, according to this definition, a vocational calling is constant. It is directly related to how God has uniquely made each person.

An essential reminder from Whelchel is that before we are called to a particular vocation, we are called to sacrifice. In fact, "our vocation flows out of a sacrificially committed life transformed by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Finally, he defines the calling of

43. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work*, 11.

44. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work*, 75.

45. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work*, 78.

believers as a call to reweave shalom and restore culture. While the Church will never create full shalom on earth until the King returns to establish it, they are called through their work to create signposts that point toward that ideal. "Until then our calling is to work for the shalom in this present world to the glory of God, by the grace of God reweaving the unraveled fabric of our broken world. . . . God changes culture through Christians' faithful participation in the vocational calling."[46]

Miller in his treatment of vocation and calling develops his concept of *LifeWork*.[47] His premise is that people are called first to salvation for a purpose, which he calls their lifework. Secondly, those who are saved have a general call to worship God, love their neighbors and steward creation. Thirdly, there is a unique call for each as to their work and deployment. He equips His people and grows them to completeness, to be engaged in His agenda in the context of His story, advancing His kingdom, and reconciling all things to Himself. Miller develops the idea of a general call to life and to life in Christ. His then explains a secondary calling, what he refers to as the "particular call" of a person to their work in order to fulfill their role in the kingdom. Mankind was created to work well, with excellence. Each person's vocation or lifework is a unique role in the unfolding of God's kingdom.[48]

The Identity of the Believer

While each of the authors indirectly treat the identity of the believer in Christ, none examine those distinctives comprehensively. It is in Christ that disciples are made whole, and

46. Whelchel, *How Then Should We Work*, 95, 103.

47. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 11, Kindle.

48. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 13, Kindle.

their identity in Him allows them to live life fully and purposefully. These authors root the purpose of the believer in the mega-narrative or the Cultural Mandate, and rightly so. However, little is done to explore how being in Christ brings wholeness to every aspect of life. Allen does briefly mention what is contemplated in the concept of being ambassadors and ministers of reconciliation as taught in 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.[49] Miller delves into Ephesians 2:8-10 and the fact that those who are saved are His workmanship, created for good works. But there is not much more to be found. Perhaps the most obvious omission is any reference to the priesthood of all believers, other than passing references when addressing the Reformation. Therefore, a brief theology of the priesthood of every believer was developed in chapter 3 of this thesis-project in an attempt to fill this void as it relates to living without the divide.

Other identifiers and descriptors in the New Testament of those in Christ are equally relevant to wholism but were not considered. The fact that disciples in Christ are called saints (1 Cor 1:2), the light of the world (Matt 5:14), the salt of the earth (Matt 5:13), that they are set free by the truth (John 8:31-33), are God's temple (I Cor 3:16-17), are a sweet aroma wherever they go (2 Cor 2:14), and are accepted in the Beloved (Eph 1:6). Each speaks to wholism. A full biblical response to the divide should deal deeply with the who a person is in the Jesus Christ.

Dualisms in Scripture

In order to understand what SSD is and what it is not, it is expedient to consider what the Bible presents as dualism and to compare them to the dualism of SSD. The only authors to do this are Stevens and Lim, who, in the context of discussing money and the sacred/secular divide examine the interchange between Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders in Matthew 22:15-22 in

49. Allen, *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*, 62.

which Jesus uses the phrase "give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." They argue convincingly that the only manner in which that can be applied is by fulling integrating life and faith.[50] They quote R. T. France who affirms of these words of the Savior that "this is not the rigid division of life into the 'sacred' and 'secular', but rather a recognition that the 'secular' finds its proper place within the overriding claim of the 'sacred.'"[51] "Money," they conclude, "can become a sacrament, a gift, and a grace. . . . Jesus deals with mammonism (deifying money) by inviting people to enter a different worldview, the kingdom worldview in which all of life if holy."[52]

The other authors do not interact with Scripture in regard to other dualisms such as light/ darkness, put off/put on, spiritual/carnal, life/death, good/evil, heaven/earth and more that can be found. It is essential to acknowledge that there is dualism in the Word, to exegete the texts in order to interpret them accurately, and finally, to compare them to the concepts found in SSD. An introduction to this step was also explored in chapter 3 as a further contribution to a biblical response to this current form of Gnosticism.

Additionally, none of the authors make much of an attempt to study the biblical concepts of "spiritual," "sacred," or "secular." No biblical word studies were found to compare what Scripture teaches with the use of those terms by those with this binary vision of life. It is indispensable in order to dispel an incorrect comprehension of these concepts at the core of the divide. This thesis-project has also sought to grapple with these terms in Scripture and to contrast what was found with the popular definitions.

---

50. Stevens and Lim, *Money Matters*, 53.

51. R. T. France, *Matthew*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), 315-16.

52. Stevens and Lim, *Money Matters*, 53.

Coram Deo

Finally, a distinctive focus that Miller brings to the theological table is living before the face of God. He argues that we are called to consciously seek to live all of life before the face of God. He summarizes, "we are to live all of our life in the presence of God, under the authority of God, and to the honor and glory of God."[53] Therefore, all that we do should be for the glory of God. While other authors speak of the glory of God, this focus on Coram Deo is both theologically sound and practically graphic and applicable, with the image of being literally and continually before the face of God. The other authors do refer to the importance of the glory of God in all that is done but neglect this historical posture of disciples of Jesus before the face of God.

Conclusion

In this chapter key literature on the sacred-secular divide has been reviewed. The contributions of various authors have been considered as they pertain, first of all, to an understanding of the divide, establishing that it is a worldview issue that has significant negative manifestations in the life and community of those that have it. It is particularly of relevance that it truncates the mission of God's people.

Secondly, this review identified four sources of this dichotomy. The first one, Western philosophy, is scrutinized by several authors. Different authors develop the history of thought from early Greek philosophers through the present. Elements of dualism were revealed in other religions as well as in Marxism and capitalism. The influence of Western thought on Latin

53. Miller, *LifeWork*, chap. 5, Kindle.

Americas was also considered. Another source of the dichotomy identified in Mesoamerica was from the Mayan worldview. This is a unique contribution of this study as no other studies were found to consider this source of influence. A third root considered was the Counter-Reformation through the influence of Spain on Latin America. The *conquistadores* brought with them a clear dualism, vestiges of which continue to permeate the worldview of many in Latin America. A final source of dualism considered was Protestant Evangelicalism with is pietistic roots. Their missionaries brought to Latin America (and around the globe) a gospel divorced from good works and social responsibility. In rejection of the god of reason worshipped by Liberals, these Evangelicals opted for a dualism that separated the "spiritual" from the "secular."

Thirdly, this chapter reviewed key literature related to a theological response to SSD. The truths related to the Lordship and Kingdom of Christ, the Big Story of Scripture, a theology of vocation, the identity of believers and dualisms in the Bible. Finally, the importance of Coram Deo was considered.

In summary, contributions from various sources were presented as well as deficiencies exposed that influenced the content of this project. While other sources were consulted, the more germane ones have been employed for this review. The body of literature contemplated offers a solid body of content in the study of this relevant and poignant malady that has infiltrated the Church globally, and specifically in Honduras.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT DESIGN AND RESULTS

Does a sacred-secular divide truly exist in the worldview of believers? If so, what is the best manner for the Church to address the issue? What insights can be gleaned to guide the process? In order probe to these questions, it was expedient to first comprehend to what extent this dualism is truly present and how it is manifest in a particular populace. In all my study on the subject, I have not found any social research to prove its existence or to better understand its expressions in a particular population. Therefore, I designed a research instrument to pursue these ends that focused on the target population in Honduras described in chapter 1.

Survey Instrument Development

Because the research was conducted in Honduras, the survey instrument was developed in Spanish in order to be fully contextualized and ensure correct idiomatic expressions and nuances that can sometimes be missed in translation. The questionnaire was developed to be applied in person, and an assistant was hired in Honduras to coordinate with each pastor and visit each local congregation to apply the questionnaire to adults eighteen and older as well as for inputting the results into a database. The survey was created in consultation with Dr. Bryan Auday of Gordon College for the technical design as well as for the interpretation of the results. As to content and wording, I consulted with several trusted, mature leaders from Central America in order to get their feedback. Their input was valuable for improving the survey instrument and assuring that the recipients would comprehend the content and instructions. In this process it was recommended that I use the term *espiritual* (spiritual) instead of *sagrado*

(sacred) as the latter is not used much in the vocabulary of the evangelical church subculture in Honduras. Other adjustments were made in order to ensure that the data would be collected in a manner that all the desired correlations could be performed.

Once there was a satisfactory draft, the survey was given to eight people, some leaders and some not, as a field test before broader application. This trial was helpful in confirming the clarity of the survey, ensuring that it could be comfortably completed in less than ten minutes, and making a few final adjustments to the wording for further precision.

The survey consisted of three sections. The first twelve questions were for demographic information that allowed comparisons of responses according to any combination of factors desired. These included age, gender, marital status, education level of the individual and both parents, local church to which they belonged, employment status and sector, formal biblical studies, years as a believer and generations of believers in their family. The second section asked respondents to classify various activities, professions and places on a five-point Likert scale with the options of very secular, secular, neutral, spiritual, and very spiritual. In each category examples were chosen that would be obvious to someone with SSD, whether very secular or very spiritual, as well as some that were harder to classify. Question 17 varied the pattern and asked which believers on a list of professions could be considered servants of God. This question only had three options: yes, no or not sure. A final question in the section explored a list of activities related to evangelism with a Likert scale as to their importance. Each of these questions will be elucidated in more detail below, clarifying the expected responses for someone with a divided worldview as opposed to a person with a biblically wholistic way of thinking.

The third and shortest section of the survey instrument was for open-ended questions in order to obtain some qualitative data. The first of these asked what makes a job or an activity

secular. The second asked for their opinion about what makes a profession a ministry. A third question posed the scenario of a young person that desires to serve God coming to them for advice as to whether to go to university to study a profession like law, engineering, medicine or journalism or to study at a Bible institute or seminary. They were asked what advice they would give them. The survey concluded with space for any final comments on the survey.

Survey Instrument Application

With the questionnaire tested and final adjustments completed, it was ready for utilization by the end of February 2020. The goal was to have the survey completed by at least 20 percent of the adults ages eighteen and older of each congregation researched.[1] I decided to apply the survey in person and on paper in order to have access to a larger portion of the potential respondents. There were two principal reasons for carrying out the research in person and not online. First, it was assumed that the younger generation uses computers or smartphones more than their parents and grandparents, so an online instrument would skew in that direction and not adequately represent the older parishioners. Secondly, the number of households with internet or a smartphone were limited and would further reduce the access to church members. The best method to obtain a solid sample size seemed to be to apply it to each congregation in person at a time they were already meeting.

Initially, I was intending to apply the survey only to four churches in the city of Siguatepeque in order to keep it simple and yet have adequate data. However, I was able to

1. My statistical research advisor, Dr. Bryan Auday, stated that 15 to 20 percent is a solid sample size for social research, so my goal was a minimum of 20 percent. Also, Piroska Bisits Bullen, in her article "How to Choose a Sample Size," accessed August 19, 2021, https://tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-choose-a-sample-size/, recommends a sample size of at least 10 percent with a minimum of one hundred participants in order to have reliable data. This minimum was far exceeded for this study.

obtain the assistance of a missionary in the capital, Tegucigalpa, who worked closely with churches in the capital as well as in the southern city of Choluteca. He was able to print copies of the survey and apply it to members of a local church in the later city during the second week of March 2020. However, that was the last and only application in person as the pandemic hit and closed down the country the following week. As of the summer of 2021, most local churches in Honduras were still not meeting in person. So, the incipient field research grounded to an abrupt halt and was put on hold, initially awaiting the reopening of Honduras to public meetings.

As the pandemic year 2020 progressed, I continued contact with pastors and leaders in Honduras. As the months went by, I realized several factors had changed since the beginning of the pandemic. First, many the youth who had been away from home working or studying were back with their families, most with their smartphones. Secondly, as social media was the way that most churches were keeping in touch, many pastors had a large percentage of their church members in a WhatsApp group, something that had not been true prior to March 2020. Thirdly, many had time on their hands as all classes and numerous jobs were still suspended. When I discovered these realities, I explored the possibility of adapting the survey to an online platform. I was already using SurveyMonkey and was able to adapt the format of the questionnaire for use on smartphones. The survey that was implemented can be seen in Appendix A in both the original Spanish version and an English translation.

As the online application of the survey eliminated the need for anyone to travel or meet in person, I was able to immediately expand the research to more churches in order to get a solid sampling from a greater number of churches at a much faster pace. Six congregations were selected from the capital city and four each from Siguatepeque and Choluteca.

I proceeded to contact each of the fourteen pastors to explain the research and ask permission to survey their congregants. All of them were disposed to cooperate and to use their WhatsApp lists to disseminate the questionnaire. I also inquired as to the total adult membership of each local church in order to establish a target number for each in order to obtain a 20 percent sampling of each church. They all agreed to encourage their congregants to participate. They were instructed to not send it to anyone outside of their own congregation and to ask their members to not forward it in order to ensure as much as possible that only members of participating churches complete the survey.

On September 29, 2020, the survey was sent to the pastors of the participating churches, who in turn sent them out to their church members, some immediately and others in the next few days. By October 3 seven of the churches already had a solid number of responses while the other half had none. A reminder was sent to all the pastors, and a few were contacted personally. By October 7 we had completed surveys from at least 20 percent of adult members from each of the fourteen churches. It would have been impossible to obtain such a response in such short a time span by doing it in person.

Initially, the plan had been to take the compiled data and travel to Honduras to interact with a couple of focus groups or to conduct interviews. However, because of a very reliable response rate, abundant quantitative data, and ample qualitative data through the survey, it was decided in consultation with my advisors that there was enough trustworthy data for the purposes of this project. Added to this was the difficulty of travel to Honduras at that point in the pandemic. Therefore, no further research was needed. Ultimately, I did conduct two interviews in order to better understand on particular result. This will be addressed at the end of the responses

Survey Responses

The survey produced a wealth of data, particularly due to the elevated sample size. It was sufficient to definitively prove the thesis of the project. In order to present and interpret the data and its proof of the existence of dualism, the quantitative data will be presented and analyzed first, starting with the demographic data and followed by the responses to the qualification of activities, places and professions. Secondly, results from the correlation of selected data will be introduced in order to acquire further insight. Thirdly, the qualitative data will be rendered and analyzed. Lastly, conclusions will be drawn from the project.

Churches Surveyed

Table 1. Adult Population of Churches and Response Rate

Name of Church, City	Total Adults	20%	Responses	Valid Responses	Percentage
Fraternidad Cristiana, Choluteca	100	20	23	22	22
Fuente de Luz, Choluteca	80	16	22	19	23.8
Hermón, Choluteca	50	10	12	9	18
Manatiales, Choluteca	50	10	12	11	22
Betel, Siguatepeque	170	34	83	78	45.9
Dios es Amor, Siguatepeque	175	35	54	50	28.6
Ebenezer, Siguatepeque	30	6	10	8	26.7
Emanuel, Siguatepeque	75	15	20	17	22.7
Dios es Amor, Tegucigalpa	100	20	42	41	41
Dios Nuestra Fortaleza, Tegucigalpa	50	10	22	19	38
Ebenezer, Tegucigalpa	60	12	15	15	25
ED, Tegucigalpa	70	14	18	17	24
Renacer, Tegucigalpa	90	18	30	29	32
Tabernáculo Evangélico, Comayagüela	200	40	40	38	19
No Answer				8	
Other churches			13	11	
Totals	1,300	260	407	392	
Total Percentages	100	20	31.3	30.2	

The total number of adult members reported by the pastors of the fourteen churches was 1,300.[2] There was outstanding participation in the survey with 407 responses received giving 31.3 percent of the total population targeted, well surpassing the goal of twenty percent. Of these responses some had to be eliminated as invalid because of not completing enough data to be usable. Fifteen responses were rejected leaving a total of 392 valid questionnaires or 30.2 percent of the total church population. Only two churches were under the goal of twenty percent, and those were at eighteen and nineteen percent, which is still well within the accepted minimum for reliable social research data. Iglesia Betel (Bethel Church) in Siguatepeque, which is our home church, had a significant 45.9 percent valid response rate. Two other congregations were above average with thirty-eight and forty-one percent participation. Table 1 presents the details of the responses.

Although there were 392 valid survey responses, not all participants answered each question. This is evident in Table 1 that indicates 8 people had "no answer" to the name of their church. In each question the number of those not responding was counted and taken into consideration for certain calculations. In this case it is unknown if the respondents were from one of the fourteen churches surveyed or if they were from other churches that did not participate. Eleven valid responses or 2.8 percent of the total came from respondents who were not members of the fourteen churches. Most indicated the name of their local church, but some did not. Their responses were considered in the results but made no significant difference.

It should also be noted that there was the greatest participation from Tegucigalpa with 40.5 percent of the total respondents while Siguatepeque had thirty-nine percent. Only 15.5

2. Note that Comayagüela and Tegucigalpa are sister cities, only separated by the Choluteca River and are both considered part of the Central District. They are generally considered one city and are so taken for this research project.

percent were from Choluteca. The remaining five percent of participants either did not respond to the question or were from other churches. It would be expected that the capital city have the most as it had the more churches participate and the largest church membership with 43.8 percent of the total. However, compared with the maximum possible sample size, Siguatepeque had thrity-four percent participation compared with 27.9 percent from the capital city and 21.7 percent from Choluteca.

Demographic Information

Age

The project was designed to focus on adults eighteen years of age and older. In order to have a balanced sample across age groups, the original design was to do the research in person. My assumption was that the obligatory conversion to electronic media would skew the participants to younger. The data suggests that this assumption was accurate. These were the six categories with respondents reporting their age as follows:

18 to 24	57
25 to 34	88
35 to 44	101
45 to 54	84
55 to 64	37
65 and older	23

The mode is thirty-five to forty-four with sixty-three percent of the participants falling in the younger half of the scale. Although there is no data available on the make-up of these congregations, the evidence from Bethel Church can be used as an example, particularly as it was the church with the highest number of respondents. The lead pastor-elder of the church

stated that at least half of their adults are over age fifty-five,[3] while of those that participated in the survey only twenty-three percent were in that age group. Although not necessarily conclusive for the entire group, it is does tend to affirm the conclusion that the sample is from a younger age group of the adults than is the reality of the total church membership makeup.

Marital Status

Other	7
Single	138
Married	220
Widowed	9
Separated	8
Divorced	8

The marital status of the contributors possibly reflects the younger age of the sampling with thirty-five percent reporting to be single. Just over fifty-six percent of the participants were married. All seven of those that identified as "other" were living with their mate but were unmarried. In Honduras the rate of unwed cohabitation for women ages fifteen to fifty-nine is 62.3 percent,[4] second highest in Latin America behind Panama.[5] For only seven people to report this status shows that the church in this aspect is countercultural. Cohabitation should have been included as a category in the survey.

Gender

Female	232
Male	158

3. Text message from Dr. Enrique Martinez, July 6, 2021.

4. Teresa Castro-Martín and Antía Domínguez-Rodríguez, "Consensual Unions in Central America: Historical Continuities and New Emerging Patterns," in *Cohabitation and Marriage in the Americas: Geo-historical Legacies and New Trends*, ed. Albert Esteve and Ron Lesthaeghe (New York, NY: Springer International Publishing, 2016), accessed July 6, 2021, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31442-6_6.

5. Castro and Domínguez, "Consensual Unions."

While the gender composition nationally is 51.3 percent female to 48.7 percent male,[6] the roughly sixty/forty split reported here is most likely an accurate representation of believers in these churches. While no current gender statistics are available for the denomination or for Evangelicals in Honduras, a 2016 study by Pew Research in the country found a fifteen percent gap between female and male religious participation with women predominating.[7] The nineteen percent spread found in this research is most likely an accurate representation.

Education Level

The participants were asked which level of education they had finished. The findings are as follows:

Elementary school	13
Middle school	9
Secondary school	146
University	171
Master's degree	41
Doctorate	8
Other	2

The mode of education completed is university level. According to the United Nations Development Program, thirty-one percent of those over twenty-five years of age in Honduras have at least some secondary education.[8] This includes rural areas that have lower education rates. In this project 93.8 percent reported having finished at least secondary school. This is very significantly above the national average. With no statistics available on the education level of church members, it is not possible to determine if this is a realistic representation of the reality of

6. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, accessed July 6, 2021, https://www.ine.gob.hn/V3/.

7. Pew Research, *The Gender Gap in Religion Around the World, Appendix B*, accessed July 12, 2021, https://www.pewforum.org/2016/03/22/the-gender-gap-in-religion-around-the-world/.

8. "Honduras," in *Human Development Report 2020*, United Nations Development Program, accessed July 12, 2021, http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/HND.

these urban churches. However, just as using a digital platform for the survey probably skewed to a younger church population sample, it most likely also weighted the educational results toward those with a higher level of education. Those with a lower education level would be less likely to participate digitally.

Parents' Education Level

The quantity of education of the parents was also explored in order to see if there was any statistically significant relationship between this and the level of dualism in those surveyed. The levels were lower than those of the participants, which is to be expected as participation in formal education has increased steadily over the last decades.[9] For both parents the mode was to have finished elementary school, followed by secondary school as seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Parents' Education Level

	Mother's Education	Father's Education
None	51	44
Elementary school	136	153
Middle school	31	33
Secondary school	104	84
University	56	43
Master's degree	6	11
Doctorate	1	6
Other	2	8

One parenthetical yet notable observation is that of those that answered "other," five commented that they did not know their father, not even enough to know his level of education.

9. For example, according to the Barro-Lee study, the average years of secondary schooling for age forty-five to forty-nine in Honduras increased from 0.35 years in 1980 to 1.22 years in 2010 growing at an average annual rate of 24.45 percent; "Education Statistics," Knoema, accessed July 12, 2021, https://knoema.com/WBEDS2017Jun/education-statistics?tsId=1491900.

This study did not ask how many of the participants were offspring of a single mother. However, this reality is typical in Honduras. According to one study in 2019, forty-six percent of mothers in the country were single.[10] As part of wholistic discipleship, it is imperative that this and other family issues be dealt with in an integral, biblical manner that deals with the social, economic and moral roots of the issue for the Church to combat this plague in society.

Employment

Another key demographic component was the occupation of the respondents. Although careful attention was given to the list of employment options, the responses revealed that at least two key areas were omitted that should have been included. One was the area of finance and banking while the other was the energy sector. Each of these sectors was indicated by nine participants. The responses revealed the following sector presence among participants:

Education	64
Business	53
Health	43
Home	40
Christian vocational ministry	23
Construction	20
Sales	20
Non-profit	16
Agriculture	12
Information technology	10
Government	9
Law	7
Tourism	7
Communication	4
Science	4
Transportation	4
Environment	3
Arts	2
Other	35

10. "Las madres solteras representan el 46% de la población de mujeres en Honduras," HRN, May 10, 2020, accessed October 1, 2021, https://www.radiohrn.hn/las-madres-solteras-representan-el-46-de-la-poblacion-de-mujeres-en-honduras.

The mode is education, followed by business, home and health. It is significant that even with a 31.9 percent sampling of only fourteen churches, believers were identified working in almost every sector of society. They are strategically placed to shine the light of Christ across society by living out their faith.

Employment Status

According to the World Bank, the official unemployment rate in Honduras in 2020 was 9.4 percent, almost double that of the prior year.[11] This research revealed an 18.2 percent unemployment rate among those that responded. The reasons for this elevated rate could be many, and are complex, making it is beyond the scope of this study to analyze. Over 66 percent were employed at least part time while 11.3 percent were students, and only 4 percent were retired. The responses by percentage were:

Part time	14.5
Full time	51.7
Unemployed	18.2
Student	11.3
Retired	4.2

Formal Bible Education

It was important to ask about formal biblical education in order to have an indicator of the influence of seminaries and Bible institutes on the problem of SSD. The results by percentage were:

No biblical training	65
Some Bible institute	10.6
Bible institute graduate	3.9
Partial seminary studies	5.7
Seminary graduates	7.3

11. "Desempleo Total (% de la población activa total) (estimación modelada OIT) – Honduras," Banco Mundial, accessed July 18, 2021, https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=HN.

Other	7.5

Of those that answered "other" and gave an explanation, all had participated in some type of discipleship or informal training at the local church level. Adding this group to those with no training gives a total of 72.5 percent with no formal training. That means that 27.5 percent had at least some formal training. That would appear to be much higher than normal for these churches. Two factors may have contributed to this. First, it would be expected that any with formal biblical training would be well connected with their local church and would be eager to participate in such a survey. Secondly, there has been a significant effort to provide biblical training in Honduras at a local level, both at night and on weekends in order to make it available to more people. Nonetheless, it is likely that the percentage of those with formal training among the respondents is somewhat higher than it is in the overall membership of the urban churches nationally.

Years as a Believer in Christ

Another question was related to the number of years as a believer. The responses must be considered along with the fact that 145 respondents were thirty-four years of age or younger. The breakdown is as follows:

I am not yet	1
I am not sure	5
0 to 2 years	2
3 to 5 years	20
6 to 10 years	41
11 to 20 years	111
21 to 30 years	96
More than 30 years	115

Only one person indicated not yet being a believer while five were not sure, so the vast majority were sure of their relationship with Christ. The mode was more than thirty years in the

faith followed by eleven to twenty years and twenty-one to thirty years. It is concerning that there were so few newer believers. There were only two that had come to Christ in the last two years and only twenty-two in the last five years. One can only wonder if the pandemic affected the connectedness and participation of newer believers more than more established ones. Even so, there is a concerning lack of people coming to faith.

Generations of Believers in the Family

Another item of inquiry was to identify those who were first-generation believers and those who came from families already of the faith (by numbers and percentage).

I am the first generation	74	19.2
At least one of my parents is/was a believer	110	28.5
At least one of my grandparents is/was a believer	177	45.9
I am not sure	25	6.4

It is significant that only nineteen percent of the participants were first-generation believers. The mode is third-generation believers followed by second-generation Christ-followers. As the previous question also indicated, the low percentage of first-generation evangelicals is troubling. Nearly three-fourths of the church members were from families of believers. While it is very positive that the faith was passed down through at least three generations, the numbers indicate a slowing of the advance of the Gospel in these churches.

Responses to Opinion Questions

Questions 13 through 17 as well as Question 19 were for the purpose of gleaning the view of the respondents regarding various aspects of life for the purpose of determining the presence of dualism. For Question 13 through Question 15 the question asked was “in your opinion are the following (activities, professions or places) secular or spiritual?” A five-point

Likert scale was used with the options of 1) very secular, 2) secular, 3) neutral, 4) spiritual or 5) very spiritual. After the results were obtained, they were used to create a frequency ratio (FR) with the secular indicator as the numerator and the spiritual indicator as the denominator, that is (very secular + secular) : (spiritual + very spiritual) or (1+2) : (4+5). This FR allowed a ranking of each activity, profession or place on a dualism spectrum in comparison with the other items in question by dividing the right side of the equation by the left side. A score of 1.00 indicated the same frequency on each side of the ratio. Values below one mean this item was seen as more spiritual whereas values of more than one indicate something that was considered more secular. This ratio is only meaningful for ranking purposes, not for comparing the amount of secularity of spirituality attributed by the FR.

Furthermore, the occurrence of neutrals (N) was counted for each option. A higher N value in a category indicated either more indecision for that a particular activity, profession or place or more affirmation that the item in question was neither secular nor spiritual for the respondents. The N value allowed for observation of patterns of frequency and could indicate strength of opinion when considered along with the frequency ratio. Taken together, the FR and the N revealed if there was a dichotomy in the way each area was viewed. These values are best understood by scrutinizing each question in detail.

Question 13: Activities

Taking into consideration how a person with SSD sees life, an assortment of ten activities was presented to the respondents. Some were chosen that would be more easily identified by them as secular or sacred and others that would not be as clear. The expected answer for someone with dualism would be a clear ranking with a wide variance. The expected answer for

someone with a biblical worldview would be one of two: either all of them would be deemed spiritual because all of life is spiritual for the believer, or all would be labelled neutral because each activity can be done in the Spirit or in the flesh. The first considers the essence of the activity while the latter focuses on the intent of the person engaging in it. Although essence was the intended focus, both results equally revealed an absence of ranking.

The results in Table 3 were given an FR for the purpose of ranking them and are listed from most secular to most spiritual according to the participants. The number of neutral responses is also indicated.

Table 3. Ranking of Activities from Most Secular to Most Spiritual

Rank	Activity	Frequency Ratio	Neutrals
1	Go to a popular music concert	306:22	53
2	Play sports	170:42	179
3	Shop	168:44	177
4	Wash dishes	122:66	202
5	Paint a landscape	101:73	216
6	Cultivate a garden	101:82	206
7	Eat	88:91	211
8	Treat a wound	64:118	205
9	Give alms	46:186	160
10	Give advice	19:246	125

It is not surprising that "go to a popular music concert" is at the top of the list because it is specifically identified as "popular," not a Christian-themed event. Nonetheless, a person without dualism would see this as spiritual in essence or neutral depending on the intent of the one engaging in the activity. Only twenty-two participants considered this activity as spiritual for a believer and fifty-three as neutral. The first six activities were seen by a majority as secular

activities and only the last four had more people perceive them as sacred than those that saw them as secular. Even eating, something so much of part of Jesus's ministry and fundamental to hospitality, was almost level. Giving advice was perceived as the most spiritual action. This clear spread and ranking gives clear evidence of a bifurcated worldview. Further evidence is that the activities in the middle of the table were the ones with the highest number of neutrals, indicating that more people were ambivalent in knowing how to categorize these. They had the least indecision with the first and last in ranking. When there is no dualism, there is no indecision or ambivalence as none of these activities are inherently sinful.

Question 14: Professions

Another aspect of life that often is called "secular" by those with a dichotomic worldview is the area of work or professions. Again, ten options were presented for consideration. For this question an obviously sinful profession, trafficker, was included in order to see how it would affect the responses. Additionally, two lines of work typically valued by those with SSD as "spiritual," namely pastor and missionary, were also included. The remaining professions were from various sectors of society. The expected response for someone with SSD would be a labeling "trafficker" as clearly secular, while "pastor" and "missionary" would be clearly spiritual professions. The remainder would be spread out in the ranking. It would also be expected that a sports professional, lawyer and businessperson would be on the secular end of the spectrum while health professionals and homemakers would be seen in a more spiritual light. Table 4 shows the actual outcomes.

Table 4. Ranking of Professions from Most Secular to Most Spiritual

Rank	Profession	Frequency Ratio	Neutrals
1	Trafficker	324:15	44
2	Professional soccer player	177:47	164
3	Businessman	144:60	185
4	Lawyer	143:62	186
5	Bricklayer	130:62	196
6	Artist	123:71	193
7	Nurse	85:99	204
8	Homemaker	90:106	191
9	Missionary	4:359	26
10	Pastor	2:370	19

The answers to Question 14 also reveal solid evidence of the existence of dualism. As was expected, trafficker was significantly the profession most classified as secular. Even so, forty-four respondents classified it as neutral while fifteen stated it was a spiritual profession. One possible explanation is that the latter group conceptualized "spiritual" as the spiritual realms of darkness, but that can only be speculated. The following three on the list (professional soccer player, businessman and lawyer) were considered by most as secular, which was consistent with dualism as was predicted. Bricklayer also fell clearly into the secular category.

On the spiritual end of the spectrum, pastor and missionary were overwhelmingly classified as spiritual, just as was anticipated for dualism. Nurse and homemaker, both acts of service, had the majority of votes on the spiritual side as well. Finally, there was a low number of neutrals for the extremes of trafficker, missionary and pastor indicating that there was a clear dichotomy in mind for these professions. In the case of the latter two, the indication was that they belong in a different, more sacred category. Yet, even for the profession considered most spiritual by the vast majority, that of pastor, nineteen people classified it as neutral, while

twenty-six did so for that of missionary. This could be a strong indication of an integrated worldview in the respondents because even in these cases that were clearly considered to be in a separate category for well over 90 percent of respondents, they chose “neutral.” Like any other profession, these too can be carried out in the flesh.

Question 15: Places

For this question twelve places were selected, some of which a dualist would consider secular and others they would deem as more spiritual. The expected response for someone with SSD would be that a church building, a seminary, a Christian school and possibly a clinic are more spiritual buildings while a sports field, mechanic shop and market would be considered more secular. The center of Roman Catholicism in Honduras is the Basilica of Suyapa in Tegucigalpa. As it is considered by most evangelicals to be a center of idol worship and heresy, it was included as a clearly religious yet unwholesome option in order to observe responses.

A dilemma for this question was what to call the church building. While most believers refer to the building as “the church,” biblically the church is a people, not a building. The nomenclature “Church building” was chosen for the wording because using just “church” could perpetuate the very dichotomy that is being confronted in this research. If in this question the word “church” had been used, it is very probable that it would have been at the bottom of the table as the most spiritual place. It still was deemed a spiritual place as seen along with the rest of the results in Table 5.

Table 5. Ranking of Places from Most Secular to Most Spiritual

Rank	Place	Frequency Ratio	Neutrals
1	Soccer field	169:23	185
2	Market	180:29	167
3	Mechanic shop	169:32	183
4	Real estate office	143:29	206
5	Public school	152:43	191
6	Cornfield	124:39	213
7	Clinic	110:47	220
8	Basilica of Suyapa	169:110	103
9	House	66:102	219
10	Church building	36:178	162
11	Christian school	25:220	133
12	Biblical seminary	11:286	82

Overall, the responses to Question 15 showed the presence of dualism. The answers were in line with the expected results from those of this perspective with the three considered most secular and the three considered most sacred being exactly as anticipated. The Basilica of Suyapa placed on the lower half of the ranking but still on the secular side of the equation. As with "trafficker" in Question 14, there is certainly the possibility of considering this cathedral as a place of spiritual warfare and of demonic activity. There were 110 respondents who considered it a spiritual place.

It appears meaningful that "home" was the only place that was considered more spiritual than secular that did not have a "spiritual" qualifier (Christian, biblical, or church). The combining of this with the fact that in the professions "homemaker" was also considered more spiritual than secular seems to be an indication that most believer understand the sanctity of the home and the importance of the presence of God in the family. It is difficult make any further assumptions without further research.

The spread of neutrals was similar to what it was for activities and professions, with the highest number of neutrals corresponding to the places that were in the middle of the table, with the exception of the basilica. As in the previous questions, this seems to indicate a difficulty in categorizing places that are not as clearly defined in the minds of many.

Question 16: Evangelism Activities

This question was an attempt to measure dualism as it relates to evangelism. The premise was that those with SSD consider evangelism as primarily a function of speaking words and undervalue the role of communicating Christ through a holy life and good deeds. Ten activities were presented, four of which were using words, three that had to do with behavior, and three with good works. The expected result was that the four activities related to words would be chosen as most important in evangelism.

The question presented was, “In your opinion how important are the following activities for evangelism?” A five-point Likert scale as given that gave the options of 1) not important, 2) of little importance, 3) neutral, 4) important, 5) very important. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Evangelism Activities from Most Important to Least Important

Rank	Activity	Frequency Ratio	Neutrals
1	Share the plan of salvation	1:371	1
2	Not lie	1:369	3
3	Help in the development of the community	2:346	26
4	Help a neighbor with a home repair	5:329	40
5	Share my testimony	7:355	11
6	Ask questions of an unbeliever	10:366	28
7	Not cheat	14:346	12
8	Hand out gospel tracts	14:328	32
9	Not yell at the referee	31:290	50
10	Be a part of social and civil activities	25:228	120

The results show that the opinion of the majority was that all the activities mentioned were important to evangelism. This was not the expected result, but it was encouraging. It should be noted that three of the activities were the negative of sinning, namely, not lying, not cheating and not yelling at that referee. In that sense, it would be normal for a believer to say that it is important to not do, regardless of tying it to communicating Christ. Also, the other activities would all be seen in a positive light, regardless of their association or not with communicating Christ.

The activity with significantly more neutrals than any other was “be a part of social and civic activities.” There were 120 respondents that did not commit to the importance of civic participation. This is not surprising as SSD tends to promote withdrawing from “the world” and rubbing shoulders with unbelievers a little as possible.

While in general there seems to be a consensus to the importance of all ten activities for evangelism, it seems very probable that if this had been an open question asking the participants to name evangelistic activities, very few would have listed not sinning or good works or civic involvement. It is plausible that all the activities were seen as important without necessarily

considering their impact on evangelism. If this survey were to be repeated, this would most likely need to be changed to an open question.

Questions 17 and 18: Servants of God

The intent of these questions was to ask about occupations again but in a varied format. The question that was posed was, "in your opinion which of the following people can be considered servants of God?" There were only three options for each occupation: yes, no and not sure. Each option included the descriptor of "believer." For example, there was a "an actor believer." A better translation in English would be "a Christian actor," but in Spanish it makes it clear in every case that each of these was a Christ follower. This question was focused on identity and calling of all Christ followers as servants of God. A totally separate question would be whether each Christian who practices these professions truly serves God in that capacity, whether missionary or ballerina. As it was discussed in chapter 3, each believer has the capacity of using their chosen profession for selfish purposes that go against His kingdom principles or choosing to use it as an opportunity to serve God and His purposes, which is precisely why He has placed them where they are. It is impossible to answer that question on a general survey without knowing well the individual in question. Therefore, the question was focused only on identity, not performance.

Question 18 gave qualitative data directly related to Question 17. It asked if their response had been "I am not sure" to any of the occupations to state why they had responded that way. The responses will be considered here and not with the other qualitative data as it specifically sheds light on the analysis of professions.

The correct answer from a biblical perspective is that all disciples of Jesus are His servants, so all should be answered "yes." For someone with a clear dualistic outlook, most likely the only two professions that would be deemed servants are the missionary and the seminary professor, while the least likely would be the politician, the actor and the ballerina. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Ranking of Professionals as Servants of God from Least Servant to Most Servant

Rank	Profession	Frequency Ratio	Not Sure
1	Christian ballerina	118:178	57
2	Christian politician	81:208	65
3	Christian actor	51:251	50
4	Christian athlete	43:289	32
5	Christian policeman	29:288	38
6	Christian businessman	25:286	41
7	Christian plumber	19:305	31
8	Christian cook	19:309	26
9	Christian public school teacher	18:310	27
10	Christian doctor	15:314	26
11	Children's food program director	14:315	23
12	Seminary professor	6:327	21
13	Missionary	2:342	11

In the ranking of the results there were no real surprises; it is an ordering that is true to SSD. However, it was unexpected that such a high percentage considered each of these as being servants of God, which they are. Except for the ballerina, each profession had between fifty-nine and sixty-nine percent affirming a servant identity for each believer, regardless of their profession.

The one option that caused the most confusion was "a Christian ballerina." The reason was that most in Honduras did not think of a ballerina as a ballet performer but as a dancer at a

bar or night club. The same word is used in Spanish for both. Many wondered how a believer could be a night club dancer. Question 18 had a space for comments if one answered, "I am not sure." Many commented on this profession expressing doubt as to how an exotic dancer could live as a believer or stating they were unsure of the type of dance.

Similarly, the job with the most "not sure" responses was the Christian politician. As in much of the world, politicians have a reputation of being corrupt and of using any public office for personal gain. Some who have professed Christ have gained elected or assigned government positions in Central America. Sadly, the vast majority have lost their way and not ended well. In the comments on politicians, many stated that it was impossible to be in politics and not be corrupt. One person opined, "I consider the political arena contaminated. A believer can enter it with good intentions, but to stay there they must be contaminated." Others however showed their dualism with comments like "because in the Bible Jesus says to give to Cesar what is Cesar's and to God what is His. He separated the two activities."

While this question was about identity, not performance, most comments in Question 18 indicate that people were thinking of performance. Part of the identity of the believer is as a servant of God, whether they embrace and live out who they are in Christ or not. However, when respondents pondered their answer, they focused on how the person lived. One person wrote that they were not sure "because it is not known if they have put their profession to the service of God. Vocational mission. On the contrary, even if they are believers, they don't necessarily serve God." Another was unsure "because it is not the profession or place of work that indicates if they are serving God. The fruit is what helps us to know a person." So, even though the question was intended for identity, some at least answered with performance in mind. A better way to have

asked the question would have been "which of these professions can be used by a believer to serve God?" The results would have been clearer.

For a missionary, only eleven responded "not sure." The assumption would be that they were again thinking of performance, not identity, in which case they would be accurate in saying it could be either. In fact, several of the comments mention that for both the missionary and the seminary professor it does not include the adjective "believer," so they were unsure and that it depends on their heart. One mentioned that for seminary professor, it does not mention what type of seminary, so they could not be sure.

However, taken as a whole, the results still reveal dualism. The top three professions on the list had fifty or more responding that they were not sure while the last had only eleven. The difference shows evidence, not of doubt of performance, but in uncertainty of if a Christian can serve God in those professions. It indicates the belief that not all believers can be considered servants of God and not all professions can be used to serve Him, a belief that is consistent with SSD.

Question 19: Activities

The last of the quantitative data came from this question. It was the second inquiry into activities of a believer. The question proffered was, "please indicate, in your opinion, which activities are a service or ministry to God on the part of a committed believer." While Question 17 explored the identity of the believer, this one examined their purpose in their activity. It specifically asks about a committed believer. A five-point Likert scale was used with 1) totally disagree, 2) disagree, 3) do not agree nor disagree, 4) agree, 5) totally agree.

The expected results of someone that sees life as a dichotomy would be that teaching a Bible class, helping a neighbor, give away food, and listening to a friend are service to God. The first of those is the principal one that could be a typical ministry of a local church, so it was likely to be at the top of the ministry list. The ones that would not be a service to God for these would most likely be going on vacation, going to the stadium and writing a romantic poem. On the contrary, someone with a biblical worldview would accept all these activities as a means of serving God. The results are in Table 8.

Table 8. Ranking of Activities from Least Ministry to Most Ministry

Rank	Activity	Frequency Ratio	Neutrals
1	Go to the stadium	164:67	122
2	Write a romantic poem	121:107	134
3	Go on vacation	113:119	118
4	Harvest beans	57:180	115
5	Run errands	60:190	102
6	Clean the yard	62:203	87
7	Help a neighbor	12:326	17
8	Listen to a friend	10:305	38
9	Teach a Bible class	10:339	4
10	Give away food	7:317	30

The ranking of the results of this question are in line with the expected results for someone with dualism. Only two of these activities had more respondents opining that they were not a service to God: going to the stadium and writing a romantic poem. Going on vacation was almost an even split. It was surprising that giving away food was considered slightly more a ministry than teaching a Bible class.

With this question, the frequency of Ns in general goes down as the activities become more clearly a ministry in the minds of the respondents. Writing a romantic poem had 134

neutrals while teaching a Bible class had only 4. Also, the four activities that were considered to be more of a service to God had a significantly lower rate of Ns. Few people had a problem identifying these as a ministry. The fact that so many more were undecided on the other six activities was an indication of dualism; even if they could not say it was not service to God, neither could they call it ministry. Clearly for them, not all of life is service to God.

In this section the results of Question 13 through Question 19 have been presented and analyzed. This consideration of the data strongly suggests that there is dualism in the thinking of the target audience. But there is more insight to glean from this raw data by applying various methods of comparison.

Comparison of Responses

In order to do delve more deeply into the data, several approaches were used. First, a dualism index (DI) was created in order to categorize the levels of SSD. Secondly, comparisons were made using Pearson R Correlations, which measure the strength and direction of linear relationships between two continuous variables. Lastly, comparisons were made using the Chi Square Test of Independence, which determines whether there is an association between independent variables. Each of these will be explained and the results analyzed in the following section.

Dualism Index

It was expedient to find a way to use the data from the survey to measure the level of dualism in each respondent, which could help prove or not its existence as well as allow a wide assortment of comparisons using the demographic data. In order to accomplish this, it was

essential to develop a scoring formula for each pertinent question in the survey. The starting point for each question was to consider how a person with SSD as well as a person without it would respond to each question. The formula for each was varied according to the expected responses. These are each explained in detail in Appendix B.

With the unique formula applied for each of the five questions, every participant was given a score for each question from zero to twelve, eighteen, twenty or twenty-four, depending on the possibilities for each, and then a total dualism score (DS) from the sum of these five. Finally, a scale was used to categorize the DS from zero to five, resulting in the dualism index (DI). As forty-four of the participants did not answer all the questions, their DS was then scaled according to the number of completed responses to calculate the DI.

Using this method, it was possible to give a DI score to all 392 participants in the research. The DI scale applied is from zero to five with zero being no SSD detected and five indicating very high dualism. The conversion of DS to DI for the 344 participants that completed all questions is shown in Table 9. The other scales for these partial responses are detailed in Appendix B.

Table 9. Dualism Score Conversion to Dualism Index

Dualism Score	Category	Dualism Index
0	No dualism	0
1-18	Very low dualism	1
19-37	Low dualism	2
38-56	Dualism	3
57-75	High dualism	4
76-92	Very high dualism	5

With a DI score for each participant, it was possible to consider the overall results as seen in Table 10. The DI scores clearly indicate the presence of the sacred-secular divide among the participants of the study. In fact, 71.4 percent revealed positive symptoms of a dualistic worldview. Only a dozen participants in the study showed no signs at all of dualism. Adding those with very low and low dualism to those with none, 112 respondents or 28.6 percent revealed low levels of the dichotomy. The median was high dualism.

Table 10. Dualism Index for All Participants

DI	Category	Frequency	Valid Percentage
0	No dualism	12	3.1
1	Very low dualism	21	7.4
2	Low dualism	79	18.1
3	Dualism	122	31.1
4	High dualism	129	32.9
5	Very high dualism	29	7.4
	Total	392	100

This research clearly proves the thesis of the existence of dualism in the churches of the *Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas de Honduras* among an evident majority of members polled. Additional delving into the data allows further insight into this worldview. Correlation of data was used to compare groups of people according to demographic categories with their DI score to identify possible contributing factors that might be relevant to addressing this malady. The two principal research tools applied the data were the Pearson R Correlation and the Chi Square test.

Pearson R Correlations

This data interpretation tool is used to find the relationship between only two variables, both of which must be continuous.[12] Ordinal data may not be used; it must be data with equal points of differentiation. Because the DI score created has equal points of differentiation (each one-sixth of the total DS), it was possible to use this to then compare the results for any segmentation of the respondents according to the demographic data compiled.

A Pearson Correlation creates what is called an R value between negative one and positive one. Any result close to zero means it is statistically less significant, that is, there is statistically no relationship between the two continuous variables compared. The closer a result is to negative or positive one, the more significant the relationship. The positive R number means that as one variable goes up, so does the other. For a negative R value, the outcome is bidirectional; as one goes down, the other goes up and vice versa. The statistical power of a result also increases with the more participants, because it is very sensitive to small variances. Because of the number of participants in this study, the statistical power of these results is strong.

Each Pearson result also yields a two-tailed probability value, answering the question, what is the probability of this correlation by random chance? For example, a probability value of .042 signifies that there are forty-two chances in a thousand that it is a random correlation. The lower the significance value, the rarer it is and the more likely that they are related. Anything lower than a value of .05 is statistically significant. All these factors together make it possible to identify statistically significant correlations in the data.

Pearson correlations were done using the DI scores and each one of the thirteen demographic data points. There were three statistically significant correlations that this analysis

12. The explanation and interpretation of the Pearson R Correlation is from Dr. Bryan Auday of Gordon College in a series of interactions in person, by email and phone calls between January 2020 and February 2021.

unearthed: the relationship of the DI score to age, to education level, and to theological education. These comparisons also revealed which realities proved to not be significantly correlated to DI score, such as gender, years as a believer and generations of Christians in the family.

A second set of correlations was applied with the same demographic data but using the Likert scale instead of the DI score. In this case each answer that used a five-point Likert scale was given a score of negative two (very secular), negative one (secular), zero (neutral) positive one (spiritual) or positive two (very spiritual). With this continuous variable value, it was possible to run a second Pearson R correlation. For this study, this scale will be referred to as the Likert conversion scale (LCS). The results of both correlations could then be compared to potentially give greater statistical probability to any corresponding correlations by each method.

With reference to the LCS, it must be noted again that in some instances the person with no dualism could have answered "neutral" to some of the options making this method of comparison not fully accurate. Nonetheless, that same person would not have indicated anything as "secular" except for possibly those few items that were blatantly sinful; therefore, their results would still have been overall on the positive side of the scale. Likewise, those with very high dualism would see some options as "spiritual," but would have had many more responses of "secular" than those with no SSD. Hence, it is still accurate that those with higher dualism would have a score closer to negative two and those without closer to positive two. Consequently, there is validity in using this data for correlations. The Pearson R results can be seen in Appendix C.

As mentioned above, the most significant correlations were those related to age, education and formal theological study. What were the conclusions?

Age

The data revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between the age of the respondent and the level of SSD at r(390) = .103, p = .042 for the DI correlation. The LCS to age correlations showed a positive correlation for both Question 14, r(352) = .175, p = .001 and for Question 15, r(352) = .227, p = .001. In other words, the data proved with a strong statistical probability that as the age of the respondents goes up, so does the level of dualism. The older participants had a higher DI score and a more negative LCS score. In comparing females to males, it is worth noting that women's DI score revealed a significantly positive correlation to age, r(231) = .135, p = .04, while males did not, r(158) = .062, p = .436. So, this positive correlation is driven by women. There is no reason evident from the research neither for the age nor gender correlation.

Education level

The data also revealed a strong negative correlation, r(384) = -.162, p = .001, between the level of education and the DI score. The higher the level of education, the lower the DI score. The LCS comparison to education level also revealed the same correlation in Question 13 at r(390) = -.164, p = .001, Question 14 at r(390) = -.223, p = .001, and Question 15 at r(390) = -.103, p = .045. Interestingly, the LCS showed that this is true in males related to all four questions, but not in females in any of them.[13] This seems to have been a male-driven correlation.

Furthermore, there was the statistically significant evidence of a negative correlation between both parents' education levels and the DI score of the participant. The higher the

13. For example, for Question 13 the result was r(232) = .016, p = .812 for females and r(157) = -.337, p = .001 for males. This reveals a very significant difference between genders.

education level of both the father, r(384) = -.213, p = .001, and the mother, r(387) = -195, p = .001, the lower the incidence of dualism in the respondent.

Why would formal education lower the DI score? This research did not delve into the matter, but some reflection on this query is incumbent. Perhaps it was because higher education helps develop critical thinking, thus allowing the believer to discern the inconsistency of a life not totally submitted to Christ. Possibly, believers that are pursuing a professional career that demands years of preparation take more time to reflect on their career choice and how it interacts with their faith. Those that do not pursue higher education may tend to follow a career path out of necessity, not choice, and just accept it as their lot in life without critical reflection. Lastly, many university students who are believers seek out other believers on campus and are involved in campus ministries. This fellowship in an academic context often triggers profound, meaningful conversation that can be transforming. It would be worth exploring this question further in a separate study as the answers may provide clues as to how to overcome SSD.

Another issue that must be weighed is the interplay between age and education as the two fundamental factors revealed to be significantly correlated to the diminution of dualism. Even if the data could not examine causality, it is worth posing if there a cause/effect relationship here. If so, which is more influential, age or education?

In the population of Honduras, the level of education is decidedly greater for the younger generation than the older.[14] However, it has already been observed that the study participants had a much higher than average level of education and skewed younger. A Pearson R Correlation applied comparing age to education level for participants revealed that there is no significant

14. "The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene," *Human Development Report 2020*, United Nations Development Program, accessed August 21, 2021, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/HND.pdf. This study shows for example an increase nationally between 1990 and 2019 from 3.5 mean years to 6.6.

correlation between the two, r(387) = -.091, p = .74. This is contrary to the general population. It is, therefore, not possible with this body of research to make any conclusions as to whether age or education were more significant in lowering the incidence of SSD.

As to the previously exposed gender differences, it is not possible to determine why women drive the age correlation and why men drive the negative correlation found with the LCS correlation. It would be necessary to engage in further research to explore possible causal relationships.

Theological education

A final Pearson correlation with statistical relevance was between the theological education of the participants and the level of dualism. Both the DI correlation, r(385) = -.238, p = .001, and the LCS correlation indicated a negative correspondence between formal biblical training and the incidence of SSD.[15] The more theological education, the lower the level of SSD. Therefore, theological education helps to confront dualism. Nonetheless, it does not eradicate it. For example, of twenty-six seminary graduates who participated, four scored in the category of dualism and six in high dualism. Nonetheless, formal training to some extent is helping to address the issue of unbiblical dichotomy.

As with the previous category, it is beneficial to ponder the reasons for this cause/effect reality. Both university education and theological education cause a lowering of the DI score with almost identical statistical power, so it is probable that the reasons are similar. Like university training, the higher the academic level of biblical education, the more critical thinking is learned and applied. Furthermore, there is more opportunity to continually ask new questions

15. For Question 13 the correlation was r(385) = -.227, p = .001, for Question 14 it was r(385) = -.175, p = .001, and for Question 19 it was r(385) = -.151, p = .005. For Question 15 there was no significant correlation.

of Scripture in community. The student is also exposed to varying views on issues that possibly had not been challenged before, thus biblically refining their understanding of life.

As there is no significant difference between the decline of dualism in university and seminary graduates, it would seem that there is not any concerted effort to confront SSD by the theological institutions of the participants. This need will be addressed in the recommendations in Chapter 6.

Chi Square Test

This tool is a test of independence implemented to compare two or more categorical variables to determine whether they are dependent or independent. Unlike the Pearson R, this test does not necessitate continuous variables. In this research it was used to determine if there was a significant difference in the DI scores of the between the cities involved in the study. The theory was that Bethel Church in Siguatepeque has a lower level of dualism as the leadership of this local body has made a concerted effort to biblically confront SSD among its members.

The result of this independence test revealed a definite dependence between the city and the prevalence of dualism, $X^2 = 29.898$, $p = .001$. Another test was conducted by comparing the independence of the three cities without including the results of Bethel. In this case there was no dependence, $X^2 = 7.661$, $p = .652$. A third Chi-Square test was applied comparing Bethel and all the other churches in a group to the DI score. It revealed a significantly dependent relationship, $X^2 = 43.132$, $p = .001$. Therefore, there was strong statistical evidence that respondents from Bethel had a significantly lower predominance of SSD.

This local body has done something that other local churches have not in order to lower their DI score. What has made a difference? Further research was undertaken through interviews

with two of the church's leaders to explore this question. The results of these dialogues are presented in Appendix C.

Qualitative Data

There were five questions that solicited qualitative data aside from those that were related to the category of "other" in the demographic section, which has already been explored. Qualitative data from Question 18 data has already been considered above as well. The answers to be contemplated in this section are from Questions 20, 21, 22 and 23. In each of these there is too much data to be included; therefore, a summary of findings along with some illustrative quotes will be included.

Question 20: Defining "Secular"

The first question in this category asked, "For you, what makes a job or an activity secular?" There was a total of 316 responses to this question. Some of these were inconclusive or needed more explanation to understand the intent of the respondent. Most fell roughly in two categories for the purposes of this investigation. Some were aligned with biblical wholism while others reflected dualism. A surprising number of responses were congruent with a biblical perspective. Many defined it as something that does not glorify God. Others were more explicit as shown in these examples:

> "Nothing (is secular). We are ambassadors of Christ wherever we are."
>
> "The lack of consecration to the Lord. Because committing our lives to the Lord is integral, all activity reflects Him because He lives in us. Wherever we are, He is".
>
> "A job or activity that goes against obeying God or where sin is involved."

"There is no difference; everything we do should glorify God."

"What makes it secular is the person who does it. Everything we do should be done for the Lord and not for man. A believer should give testimony of his life in what he does."

"For the true Christian everything is a part of everything because there should be integrity."

"All of our life should be connected to God. We cannot separate anything from Him."

"For me there is no such difference. God is in every place and should be glorified with our activities in every area of life."

"When it is obviously immoral or illicit. And especially when it is done without taking into account how it affects others and without considering the repercussions that the activity can have on my own spiritual life and on the others involved."

"Nothing (is secular) because there is no separation between spiritual and secular. Therefore, all that we do is spiritual."

"Our manner of thinking. When Christ transforms our mind, there is no such thing as secular or spiritual because we are whole beings. That is to say our lives, all that we do, is at the service of the Lord and for Him or not."

Other comments fell just as obviously in the category of a divided mind. Take for example the following declarations:

"What is not done in a religious environment."

"The work environment."

"It is work that is done every day."

"When you do it and don't talk about Christ."

"It is daily activities that we do by human nature."

"That does not have to do with any ministry."

"What is done for remuneration for the good of the family."

"It is secular when things related to Jesus are not talked about and salvation through the gospel."

"It is a job or activity that is not religious, an activity related to society."

"Carry out a job that in this case has nothing to do with the things of God, for example, sweep, go to work, watch TV, etc."

"Anything that is outside of the service to evangelistic ministry."

"Things that are for the purpose of human labor."

"What is done in daily life."

"The activities that we carry out daily with the purpose of obtaining economic gain."

"Going to sports events."

"Going out or being a part of work activities with people who are not believers and in inappropriate places."

"It is something that is done to support yourself in the world or an activity that is for recreation."

Each of these revealed dimensions of a divided life and were clear evidence of the malady at hand. Several mentioned words like "daily" and "routine," exhibiting a disconnect between Christ and quotidian endeavors. Several also mentioned that what makes work or activities spiritual is talking about Christ or sharing the Gospel. While this is important, it again disengages walk from words, a clear symptom of SSD.

Question 21: Professions as Ministry

Question 21 asked, "In your opinion what makes a profession a ministry?" As with the previous query, there were those that clearly expressed thinking consistent with dualism while many conveyed biblical thinking. Many respondents' thoughts were limited and not clear enough to categorize. Finally, there were comments that were clearly ambiguous, containing elements of biblical thinking as well as notions suggesting dualism.

More than half of the 325 replies were consistent with biblical thought, although brief and only containing glimpses of a biblical theology of work and vocation. Many referred to service to God and the glory of God. A sampling of their words shows these and other themes:

"Every profession is a ministry if all that we do is for the Lord and for His glory."

"That it has the clear end of glorifying God."

"That it is done to honor God, following His commands and seeking to help your neighbor."

"Wherever I am or do, I am a witness of Christ."

"The committed believer himself, in whatever profession, . . . should see it as a means of serving the Lord."

"That it be carried out with the glory of the Lord in mind, doing all for the Lord and not for men."

"When it is consecrated or dedicated to God."

"When what is done is for God and not man. You do it with excellence and give help to your neighbor to give testimony of Christ."

"It becomes a ministry when the principal motive is to glorify God and help your neighbor, not just as a need to earn money."

"If we do it to honor God, we can have any profession and make it our ministry to serve God."

"Every profession or occupation is only an opportunity to serve the Lord. It has to do with the commitment of each one as a child of God. (We need to) shine in the place where we are."

"There is no difference. All that is done is for God. You cannot divide ministry and profession."

"Everything that we do daily is directed toward honoring God and serving my neighbor."

"See as the mission of God that place (where you work)."

In contrast, there were multiple comments that revealed a dichotomy. Some were blatantly so like the one who stated, "the one (profession) has nothing to do with the other (ministry)" or another who opined, "None. Work is not a ministry; the ministry we do with our testimony." While few expressed their divided worldview so unambiguously, others did give conspicuous clues. A common perception was that what makes a profession a ministry is to speak the gospel or share the plan of salvation. Work itself was not seen as ministry. Some examples were expressions such as:

"When the Word is preached to them or the plan of salvation."

"We can talk about Christ with our profession."

"When the professional evangelizes."

"Any profession can be a ministry knowing how to take advantage of each opportunity to present the plan of salvation."

"Many work for their profession and let the profession determine the way that they live instead of using the profession as a means, an instrument, to speak to people about who Christ is."

"It is where God is talked about, and Bible studies are given."

A second clear manifestation of dualism were statements that implied that professional work was not ministry; ministry is done apart from the professions. Some examples of these opinions on when a profession is ministry are:

"When (the professional) serves in the church directly."

"Be a Sunday school teacher."

"The way to serve is in within the church."

"If they are set apart for that purpose, and they are directed by a Christian ministry."

"It happens when the believer goes to a biblical seminary."

"When we leave everything and follow Christ and dedicate ourselves to the service to God."

A final example is of ambivalence, where the respondent manifested a mixture of thinking. They asserted that "any profession, as long as it does not imply something immoral or sinful, could be a ministry, as long as it has a focus on serving the Lord, on preaching the gospel, on generating money to support the work of God and His servants, or simply being a good testimony and influence at work." There is biblical thinking here in seeing any profession as serving the Lord, in preaching the gospel and having a good testimony. However, money was only seen as of service to God when it is an offering "to support the work of God." The work of the professional who is earning the money is not seen as true "work of God;" that is for "His

servants," those supported by the offerings of others. This amalgam of ideas seems to be commonplace; there was some biblical thinking, but SSD seemed to frequently rear its ugly head.

These examples of dualism exposed the thinking that ministry and the professions are divided. Some manifested directly that work is not service to God. Others stated that the only way to serve God through work is by speaking the gospel. Even those who revealed a more wholistic approach to the professions and ministry did not manifest a hardy, biblical theology of work. While it is impossible to communicate a full theology in short survey response, it is reasonable to expect that some mention would be found of key elements or concepts of a theology of work. None, for example, mentioned principles found in the creation narrative and the Cultural Mandate about the inherent value of work or the participation of mankind in the purposes of creation. There was no mention of the professions themselves being a service to fellow man. There is a palpable need of vibrant and comprehensive biblical teaching on work and vocation.

Question 22: Vocation

This query explored understanding of calling, vocation and professions. This was accomplished by presenting a simple example and asking for advice. The case presented was, "Imagine a young person committed to serving God who is deciding if he should study a career at university (like law, engineering, medicine or journalism) or go to Bible school. What counsel would you give him?" The 333 reactions again showed both some with a more biblical perspective, others with a clear division of thought, and some with a mixed view.

The most repeated advice was prayer (sometimes with fasting), seeking God and seeking counsel. Many did not comment beyond that; however, most did expand their reflections, allowing glimpses into their view of work and professions. Many conveyed concepts in line with Scripture. For example, thirty-one people recommended studying both a university career and Bible, putting all to the service of God. Other examples of integrated thinking included:

"That he studies whichever of the careers is his vocation."

"As long as the young person does not move away from his convictions, he can decide to go to the university or to a seminary."

"The important thing is to first identify the call of God. With that, I would tell him that God is pleased with obedience and in that sense he should consider obedience to his parents."

"Well, there is no difference in how he could (serve God) in making either decision, and he will be able to fulfill the will of God serving in mission wherever He places him."

"That he follows his calling (vocation). With whichever he chooses he will have the opportunity to serve at one hundred percent."

"Deciding between a university career and seminary depends only on the calling that weighs in his heart. Whatever his superior studies, he should have the intention of honoring and pleasing God. If that is his principal objective, the career or studies of his choice will only be a means to exalt our God."

"That he prays much that God guides him and clarifies his calling, if He wants to train him in Bible to serve in that way or that he uses his profession. Whichever it is, that it be to serve in the sense of vocational mission."

"Analyze well your aptitudes and pray that God guides your decision. You can serve God being a lawyer, engineer, doctor, journalist, pastor or theologian."

"I would say that it does not matter which profession; it is the heart that counts. Your career is not an end in itself; it is a means to serve the Lord."

"That he studies what he feels is his vocation and dedicates his profession to God and His mission."

"What is God's calling on your life? How has He blessed you with gifts and abilities?"

". . . we were not all destined to do the same things, so if the young person desires to serve God with all of his life, he will do it no matter if he is in a seminary or a hospital."

Each of these quotes reflect facets of an integrated approach to serving God through any career with premises such as honoring and serving God, vocation, the mission of God and the unique gifting of each person. It was encouraging to read this collection of perspectives. On the other hand, there were also ample samples of dualism. Thirty-six people directly stated that seminary was the best choice for a young person wanting to serve God. Here are some of the opinions that reveal this way of thinking:

"If his conviction is to serve God, he should go to seminary."

"That he evaluates what he wants to do after finishing his studies. His university studies can be an instrument so that after seminary he can have a successful ministry."

"To study Bible, he needs a call from God."

"I think that with any career you can serve the Lord, either with a secular profession or a biblical seminary we can be light."

"That he thinks about it because (university) could cause him to go astray from the way."

"If he is doubting, he should not go to seminary."

"If his desire is to serve full-time, he should go prepare himself biblically."

"Dedicate time to God as a priority and know His Word and then prepare himself in another manner."

"That he studies any of the careers mentioned. Go to seminary only if he believes he has a special calling."

"That he studies what he likes. In any career you can serve God. He can even generate his own income to serve in the ministry."

"All in its own time. First the things of God (assumed to be seminary)."

"If truly he feels the calling of God to His service and if he has the desire to honor and obey God, I would advise he go to the seminary and, if not, that he dedicates himself to his secular studies."

". . . I studied careers at the university, and now I feel called to seminary to prepare for service to God."

"Both forms of preparation are important, but theological preparation could be said to be better."

"That he goes to seminary because there he can give himself completely to service for God."

From these quotes several inferences can be drawn. First, for these respondents, the person who truly wants to serve God must go to seminary. Other career paths are not considered ministry to God. Secondly, it is those going to seminary that need a calling or a "special calling," not each of God's children. It is a superior calling for them, so only that calling needs to be without doubts. The biblical concept of the calling and vocation of every believer and of each fully living life in service to the Lord was not found here.

While this question reveals biblical thinking on the part of some, it also clearly shows dualistic thinking as it pertains to the priesthood, the calling, and the vocation of every believer. The hypothesis that there is dualism present is exemplified and proven here.

Question 23: Comments

The last query in the survey asked if there were any additional comments on the questionnaire. There were 143 annotations to consider. There were numerous remarks about the questionnaire causing them to reflect and reconsider how they really look at life, a heartening by-product. There were a few comments about how to improve the survey, mostly regarding the need for clarifying definitions for terms such as "ministry," "service," and "secular." The latter term was in fact defined, and the first two terms were purposefully used as synonyms. A few also mentioned that there would have been value of being able to discuss the concepts in a group setting. Several inquired about the objectives of the study and obtaining the outcomes.

The majority of annotations by participants were from those wanting to clarify that there is no separation between secular and sacred. Over 40 sought to elucidate a more wholistic view of life. It is reasonable that someone with a dualistic view would not have had an issue with the inquiries, while for the person with little or no dualism, participation could have more naturally elicited a desire to push back or explain. It is not unreasonable that of the 112 respondents with no, very low or low dualism, about 40 percent would want to comment.

Some participants indicated the importance of the intent of the heart, the attitude, as does the Word of God as seen in chapter 3. The correct question as one engages in a certain profession or activity is if they have a Christlike attitude and motivation. One person commented that "the professions that are carried out or the places that are visited will have spiritual relevance or of

service to God according to the end and attitude that is had before them. In other words, if I go to a stadium and yell insults, well there is nothing spiritual or of service to God in that. If I am a lawyer, but I twist the law for my benefit, there is nothing spiritual in that."

Several of these comments call the Church to be careful in judging by outward appearances. One respondent reflected:

> We cannot judge the human heart. What may seem "secular" to us may be an intention to serve the Lord. For example, if we see someone go on vacation, how do we know they are not going on a personal spiritual retreat? Or something can be seen as "spiritual" like teaching a Bible class and can have the only intent of showing others my knowledge and capacity.

While it can be called into question if the only thing that makes a vacation honoring to God is for it to be a "spiritual retreat," the point of the assertion should not be missed. Believers are often judged by an activity itself, giving it intrinsic value regardless of intent or attitude. This goes to the heart of SSD. Another participant reiterates the weight of attitude stating:

> Many times, we tend to judge other people with our own human judgement about the basis of their lives. Many people think that a politician cannot be a Christian because they are surrounded by corruption. Jesus, while on earth, was surrounded by the sin of humanity, but it did not make Him a sinner. If God is with us, there is nothing that can separate us from His love nor His mercy. We need to stop seeing with our physical eyes and start to see with the eyes of the heart, just as Jesus did with us. We can be surrounded by bad people, but God commands us to be light in the darkness, not judges of attitudes, words and behavior. Only God has the right to judge.

While this quote may expose the need to delve into the topic of judging one another from a biblical perspective, nonetheless their point of the possibility of service to God by Christian politicians committed to Him is accurate. They are pleading with the Church to stop throwing stones at those who attempt to be light in the deep darkness of many spheres of society. As one commentor laments, "It is interesting and necessary to take people out of the bubble in which they believe that the secular cannot be used to honor God. Unfortunately, in the Christian circle it is difficult to carry out your profession and that they tell you that you need to start serving when

you already are, only not inside the church." This is a clear reference to leaders that only see ministry as what happens in the programs of a local church and not the daily life of the believer-priest.

A couple of respondents called the Church to action, particularly in teaching and forming believers. One commentary read, "from the moment that I believed in Christ, my life became spiritual! We are lacking a strong pedagogy so that the Church understands this!" Comparably, another stated that "as a Church, we need to mobilize and equip each believer so that they are a witness wherever they are, whether at home, at school or at work." A third echoes their sentiment declaring that "some churches lack intentional orientation in certain themes, and if the believer has not acquired strong convictions by his own means, it is easy to be deceived and not have clear answers to any situation. It is urgent that we create these spaces." Another shares this concern stating that "it is important that in our churches there be discipleship groups about these topics in which we have doubts and that are apparently simple. In truth there is much to clarify."

All four of these observers alluded to the truth that the Church needs intentional discipleship of professionals to assist them in living out their faith in the marketplace. There needs to be intentional teaching and spaces created to interact on these important matters.

There were other calls to action by the Church and its leaders as well. One individual believed "that the Church in general is too passive in light of so much injustice that there is in our country. I think that little or nothing is being done at the level of leadership to influence. The example we have is the life of Jesus." Here is a believer who saw more to the mission of the Church than what is being carried out. They saw no influence in society by the Church. In a similar manner another stated that "our association of churches has no social projection in the interior of the country where we have a presence."

There were also some critiques of the churches without any call to action, only what can be implied by the complaint. One claimed "that the attitude of the Central American churches (referring to the denomination) has labeled much as secular and divided the ministerial. This has affected the believing youth and, consequently, the children."

In summary, these closing comments confirmed the presence of SSD in the churches surveyed. They clearly indicated that it is a reality that affects the mission of the Church in Honduras.

Survey Conclusions

This chapter has described the development of the survey instrument and has presented and interpreted the demographic data, the responses to each question, the comparison of data, and the qualitative data from the survey. Each of these has been analyzed as it pertains to a dichotomy in the worldview of believers in the sample population.

The data exposed the presence of dualism in the minds of those studied in reference to activities, places and professions. The data was also used to produce both a dualism index and a Likert conversion scale. Each of these revealed the presence of dualism in the sample. The Pearson R Correlations uncovered a relationship between both age and education with the presence of dualism. As the age went up, so did the level of dualism. As the education level of the participants and their parents went up, the level of SSD went down. The Chi Square Test of Independence revealed that Bethel Church had a significantly lower incidence of this dichotomy.

The qualitative data from the survey unveiled dualism, and each of the questions contributed to proving the thesis of this study. Question 20 clearly exposed dualism in the minds of many according to their definitions of "secular." Whether work can be ministry was explored

in Question 21, disclosing clear statements by some that work is not ministry or that it is only ministry when the gospel is spoken, or the Word taught. Few saw work as being intrinsically ministry. Question 22 exposed a weak theology of calling and vocation. The biblical concept of the calling and vocation of every believer and of each one fully living life in service to the Lord and fellow man was absent. Finally, Question 23 laid bare the divide in many through the final comments of some participants. The need to teach and disciple professionals who are struggling to be light in darkness was highlighted.

In conclusion both the quantitative and qualitative data from this research project clearly prove the thesis that was presented that a sacred-secular divide exists in the worldview of believers in Honduras that affects the mission of God's people. Based upon this reality, what recommendations can be given considering the findings of the investigation? The final chapter will draw from these results to present conclusions, provide suggestions and propose initiatives.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What light does this project shed on the Church in Honduras and beyond? What conclusions and recommendations can be drawn from the research? What are some of the implications for the Church and its mission? This chapter proposes key conclusions and specific recommendations. The former summarizes the major findings while the latter offers specific applications for local churches, theological institutions, and missions entities, whether in Latin America or anywhere else where dualism is present. Finally, particular attention is given to how this study applies to Avant Ministries with specific steps of implementation.

General Conclusions

Before considering specific recommendations regarding the dichotomy under consideration, some general conclusions need to be contemplated. What are the overriding deductions that can be gleaned from this research project?

First, the sacred-secular divide is a proven reality in the worldview of church members in Honduras. Moreover, we know from experience and from the observations of many authors studied that this phenomenon is not limited to the sample used for this project; indeed, it is a global certainty which this investigation was able to prove through social research. Secondly, a review of the affirmations of SSD and the teaching of Scripture unequivocally substantiates that it is a nonbiblical way of thinking. It should not be tolerated in the Church of Jesus Christ. Thirdly, a review of the history of thought influences in Honduras identified four sources of dualistic thinking that have molded worldview in Honduras and other latitudes and longitudes as

well. Recognizing these causes is helpful in identifying and confronting this incorrect thinking. Lastly, there are identifiable, far-reaching effects of SSD that negatively influence the daily life and mission of God's people. It distorts the understanding of who God is, of evangelism and discipleship, and the scope of both the ministry and the impact of the Church in the world. It is not a minor issue. The reputation of God Himself is at stake.

Although dualism is a peril for the Church, it is wise to mull over the fact that there is also danger in overcorrecting, as so often has happened in the history of the Church. Just as conservative evangelicalism in the West overreacted to the social gospel more than a century ago, a move to compensate for proclamation without works can also result in unbalance. In any and every area that there is rectification, overcorrection is a present threat. Three examples of possible overreaction suffice to illustrate the issue and provide fuel for thought of those who pursue biblical correction of this warped view of reality.

First of all, the being and doing of the communication of the gospel can be so emphasized that proclamation is minimized. That is a real and present danger that must be avoided. A second danger is that in the name of the priesthood of all believers, the calling and ministry of salaried pastors and others who are supported by offerings can be minimized. This is not healthy either and could cause disrespect and hurt. Thirdly, in an effort to seek a biblical perspective on the sanctity of all places where the Spirit is present, there could be a disrespect for spaces that are set aside for the corporate worship of God's people. This could be detrimental and even divisive. In any and all efforts for correction, the Church should define, be vigilant for, and avoid overcompensation.

Recommendations for the Local Church

Brazilian businessman and mission practitioner Joao Mordomo acknowledges the depth of the problem of dualism in the Church in Latin America:

> My day-to-day experience in both mission and business has convinced me that the sacred-secular divide is one of the greatest challenges facing not only Latin American missions, but the Latin American Church at large. The misguided focus on the "supremacy of the sacred" and relegation of the laity as "second class citizens" stifles and restrains. This way of thinking marginalizes and demoralizes the laity, relegating them to "mere secular" work and teaching them that their dignity is based on their ability to give tithes and offerings and teach Sunday school classes. Most Latin American Christian business professionals do not realize—and, research indicates, are not taught—that the "you" in 1 Pet. 2:9 ("*you* are a chosen race, a *royal priesthood*, a holy nation") includes them! They do not see the sacred and missionary value in their business activities, nor do most of them ever consider that their businesses in and of themselves could and should be missionary instruments.[1]

The key to eliminating a divided worldview resides in the local church where life-on-life discipleship should take place. While theological schools and other Christian entities can greatly influence churches, it is ultimately at the family and local community level where a Christian worldview is formed.[2] Several concrete recommendations for local congregations follow from this study.

The first recommendation is to bear in mind that the role of leadership is to prepare believers for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11,12). It is the believer-priest that carries the weight of ministry, both to fellow Christians to build them up (Eph 4:13) and to the world as ambassadors of reconciliation to God (2 Cor 5:19,20). Care must be taken to understand the daily struggles, temptations, challenges and opportunities that Christians have in the marketplace.

---

1. Joao Mordomo, "What Does the Sacred-Secular Divide Look Like Around the World?", Business As Mission, April 22, 2015, accessed October 7, 2021, https://businessasmission.com/divide-around-the-world/.

2. It is understood that there are other contributing factor in worldview formation. Media in particular play a significant role in current generations. However, this as well as other contributing forces are beyond the scope of this project but should be considered in any effort to shape the worldview of others.

These must be addressed in light of living continuously on mission. Believers need a professional identity, competency, and integrity based on God's view of who they are and what they do.

A second suggestion is to assure that solid biblical teaching is a core element of the life of the church . Some of the crucial areas of teaching include the priesthood and call of every believer, a theology of work and vocation, the mega-narrative of Scripture and how is informs the mission of God's people, the Lordship of Jesus over all of life, and the doxological and missiological purposes of all that God's people are, all that they do, and all that they say. And always truth must be allowed to trump tradition, while not throwing out meaningful tradition only for the sake of change.

Thirdly, churches need to engage with their community at all levels, both individually and corporately. Too many local bodies would not be missed at all if they disappeared from their community because they are disengaged from what is happening around them. When that engagement is implemented with biblical reflection in community, change happens. This interaction with the world needs to include a public theology that enters into dialog with society on the issues facing the community.

Fourthly, church leaders need to create a community where what is done outside of church gatherings is just as important than when they are together. In the words of an African leader, "the reality of 'Church Scattered'. . . being equally critically important as the 'Church Gathered' is yet to dawn."[3] It could even be argued that what is done when the church is

3. Oladotun Reju, "Theology of Work" (Plenary lecture, ICETE Conference, Panama City, Panama, November 1, 2018), accessed September 13, 2021, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hAf5BLiUtx2j4e1a5XMSfzOyO4PbRB4k/view?ts=5c000222.

dispersed is more important than when it is assembled because it proves if what happens when together is effective or not. The Church was made for mission.

In the fifth place, local churches should commission, celebrate and accompany professionals on mission in the workplace. When they launch out into a new job, which is a new mission setting, they should be prayed over and commissioned, just as is often done with missionaries. They should celebrate kingdom advances of those in the marketplace by allowing them to share testimonies of how God is working there. Specific workplace challenges such as a production, marketing, distribution, logistics or personnel issues matter to the mission of the Church and should be the subject of corporate prayer. These simple yet profound practices can greatly encourage and focus marketplace servants of God.

Lastly, like in Bethel Church, it would be helpful for local church leaders to ask themselves how they can minimize the clergy-laity divide. How can leadership be shared so that there is not only one strong, predominant leader? This challenge will be more complicated with some forms of church polity and practice than others, but it is necessary if the priesthood of all believers is to be truly expressed.

Recommendations for Theological Institutions

Seminaries and Bible institutes are key to changing the way churches think and live. Unfortunately, dualism is pervasive in many schools as well. In fact, the existential rationale for most schools is that they are preparing those that God has called to "full-time Christian ministry." The problem is that God has called all believers to serve Him full-time, although not all will be paid by a local church or Christian organization or live from offerings. Granted, it is of upmost importance that men and women be trained in the Word of God, theology, Christian

education and such. Those that do spend their working hours directly serving a local church or the global Church need to be trained well. However, theological institutions need to serve the whole body of Christ and should be committed to whole-life discipleship.

Significantly, in 2018 The International Council for Evangelical Theological Education (ICETE) focused precisely on the need of institutions to confront this dualism by focusing on the sacred-secular divide as the theme of their global consultation in Panama. In describing the necessity of this focus, the organizers affirmed:

> The ICETE Manifesto on the Renewal of Evangelical Theological Education affirms "Our theological programmes must become manifestly of the church, through the church and for the church." However, in many cases theological education empowers only an elite, and not all the people of God. In reality, there remains a divide between those who serve in full-time or formal ministry, and those who seek to serve faithfully in "secular" positions. How should theological educators address this Sacred-Secular Divide? Are we equipping our students with the right worldview and tools in order for them to truly equip their church members for an effective service in all areas of life? What can we learn from one another as we share our global collective wisdom on bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide?[4]

If this dualism is to be eliminated from the worldview of followers of Christ, it is imperative that institutions of theological education take seriously the proposals of ICETE's global consultation on the issue. Key documents from the consultation as well as a course on the topic are available for study.[5]

Based on this study as well as ICETE's findings, specific recommendations for seminaries include reviewing their whole curriculum to ensure that wholism is incorporated. Mark Greene challenges seminaries by proclaiming, "The problem cannot be addressed by changing the teaching in just one subject, such as missiology. It is a systemic problem and affects

4. ICETE, "ICETE 2018," https://icete.info/equipping/consultations/c18-panama/, accessed August 17, 2021.

5. See "ICETE 2018."

all fields and must be specifically addressed in the teaching of core subjects like Bible, hermeneutics, and doctrine."[6] Such a review would be an enormous undertaking but could be accomplished over time if wholism is truly a desired educational outcome. Some of the most crucial classes that could be prioritized are ecclesiology and missiology.

Secondly, there are courses that could be added to curricula that could specifically address the issue. For example, there could be an offering on a Theology of Work and Vocation, particularly in the Latin American context where society has a markedly unbiblical view of work which has been rarely confronted in evangelical circles. Other themes that could be separate foci of study or could be incorporated into existing subjects are the missional identity of all believers (an in depth look at the priesthood of all believers, for example) and the mega-narrative of Scripture. Another possibility would be a class that explores a theology for major segments of society like arts, education, government, sports, communication, health, environment and others. Lastly, a course on public theology could substantially equip leaders to think through what it means for the Church engage public truth in areas such as corruption, reconciliation, racism, unemployment and any other issue in society. Dr. Corneliu Constantineanu, a university professor from Romania, defined the need:

> This may be, indeed, one of the most important missiological concerns for Christians of this generation, in our context: to proclaim and embody the gospel as public truth, i.e., a theology concerned with and addressing the *entire reality* of life in society; to search for and articulate a solid public theology of culture, work, power, social justice and reconciliation, a public theology for the common good and human flourishing.[7]

---

6. Mark Greene and Ian Shaw, "Overcoming the Sacred/Secular Divide through Theological Education" (Plenary lecture, ICETE Conference, Panama City, Panama, November 1, 2018), accessed September 13, 2021, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wh9-IDEgE46Ol01f49VKSjxLxZnbf0NH/view?ts=5c000222.

7. Corneliu Constantineanu, "Public Theology" (Plenary lecture, ICETE Conference, Panama City, Panama, November 1, 2018), accessed September 13, 2021, https://icete.info/equipping/consultations/c18-panama/.

Thirdly, theological institutions should serve the whole body of Christ in preparing them for ministry. They would have a much broader appeal and potential reach if they would create programs to serve the whole body of Christ. They could assist professionals to deeply integrate their faith and their profession and could lead and engage in solid theological reflection on issues facing believers in society. Programs could be offered to equip those beginning or already attending university to understand worldview and how their faith relates to the academic context they must navigate. The opportunities are boundless.

Lastly, theological schools need to prepare those that will serve as pastors and teachers to equip believers to serve God with their whole life where He has planted them. They need to envision and empower the leaders to make whole-life, missional discipleship the cornerstone of the local congregations that they serve. They need to give them the tools to be able to creatively ask new questions of Scripture and find theologically accurate, yet eminently practical answers, applicable to quotidian life in a convoluted society.

Recommendations for Missions Entities

Missions agencies typically focus on cross-cultural missional engagement. The most widely accepted model in the modern age of missions is for missionaries to be supported by offerings from churches and individuals. This model has enabled tens of thousands of cross-cultural servants to take the hope of Jesus Christ to the nations. In the last decades, more are promoting business as missions as well as employment among the nations as viable approaches to deployment of missionaries. The first recommendation for missions entities is to seriously consider the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. Support by offerings is not necessarily the best or most spiritual approach. Some agencies boldly promote one way over another. It

seems that a balanced approach is to seek ways to implement all three options or a combination of them. It requires creativity, flexibility, and concerted effort, particularly for older missions agencies, but it will create more avenues of access to those who have not yet heard.

One of the disadvantages of living from offerings that needs to be contemplated is the example that is given to those that God brings to Himself through the witness of the missionary. It can give the impression that the true life of service is to quit your job and live from offerings. Paul mentions to the Thessalonians that one of the reasons he worked on his business of manufacturing and selling tents while living among them was precisely to be an example to them. He tells them (2 Thess 3:7-10):

> For you know yourselves how you must imitate us, because we did not behave without discipline among you, and we did not eat anyone's food without paying. Instead, in toil and drudgery we worked night and day in order not to burden you. It was not because we do not have that right, but to give ourselves as an example for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we used to give you this command: "If anyone is not willing to work, neither should he eat."

Along with this is another disadvantage, that of risking testimony. If the unreached see someone who, in their eyes, never goes to work and is free to go and come all day, doubts can ensue as to the trustworthiness of the missionary. Our team in Albania found that having a non-profit organization and an office with regular work hours was very helpful in breaking down these doubts. Neither of these disadvantages nor others are invincible; nonetheless, it is wise to be aware that the more a missionary integrates into the life of the community, the more opportunities they have to show and speak the gospel.

A third recommendation is to include some type of training on SSD for missionaries. It is essential that they be aware of any threads of dualism in their own minds. If not, they will most likely communicate this division in some fashion to those they disciple among the nations and could leave a church with a skewed view of God and life. Western missionaries have planted

churches with SSD across the globe and often, unaware, have not confronted the dualism inherent in some cultures.

Lastly, training and tools should be provided for missionaries to understand well the worldview of the peoples among whom they serve. Often, they are left on their own to decipher their host culture. Much emphasis in discipleship is placed on changing beliefs and behaviors but not as much on the values and worldview that undergird them. This produces disciples that have a reduced transformation and negligible impact on society. The cross-cultural worker needs to comprehend the importance of worldview and how it affects evangelism and discipleship as well as how to identify and confront biblically the wrong thinking and resulting erroneous values of a culture. At the very least a basic training can open the door for missionaries to be aware of their own worldview and the importance it has in forming Christ in others.

Implementation in Avant Ministries

Ultimately, the most important question upon completion of this investigation is how I will seek application of this research to the missions agency that I am privileged to help lead. There are two levels of enactment, one in the organization as a whole and the other through churches in Latin America through the department that I lead.

The first exigent undertaking will be confronting the SSD that exists within the organization. An initial task will be to prepare a brief of my project for the rest of the Executive Team for discussion. This is already on the agenda for our next working retreat. The specific content as well as the discussion questions will need to be carefully and prayerfully contemplated and presented. It will include a request to develop and deliver training in SSD that is designed specifically for our missionaries in process as well as those on the field.

I have had the privilege at Avant in the last two years to lead the creation and development of the Global Engagement Department, which is focused on journeying with the Church in the Global South in their missional development. The mission of the department is to develop missional churches in the Global South that produce unconditional Christians and mobilize effective servants to the whole world. Initially, we are focusing on Latin America. With the team we created the *Red de iglesias misionales* (Network of Missional Churches). After eighteen months, we have over three hundred local churches participating in the network and receiving training, mentoring and ample materials to assist them in their missional development. We have also been able to approve eighteen new missionaries from numerous Latin American countries to serve in unreached parts of Europe and Asia.

Already I have developed introductory studies on both a theology of work in a four-part video series, as well as a five-lesson study on the priesthood of all believers, both in Spanish and available through our website ObreroFiel.com. Both of these will be developed into seminars with videos, study guides and PowerPoint presentations and will be available both online and in person. A sermon series on the challenge of SSD has also been developed and delivered to pastors in Honduras. This needs to be updated and modified into a seminar format similar to the two above mentioned trainings. It is possible that other related themes will emerge from this series. There is also the possibility of a monthly blog. We have the advantage of having a web presence with several hundred thousand yearly visitors that can be an asset in disseminating information and marketing seminars and other materials. Moreover, we have begun live forums for pastors where this subject could be addressed.

Eventually, after the material has been used and feedback received that will amplify and polish the content, there is the possibility of publishing a book in both electronic and print

formats through a publishing house for Latin America that Avant owns and operates. Another source of materials could be testimonies of wholism in mission from around Latin America and from Latinos in cross-cultural service globally. Stories are especially effective in communicating life-altering truth; they give flesh to principals and ideas while serving as concrete models for those that contemplate them.

An additional area of application will be leading a creative exploration and development of concrete opportunities for missionaries from Latin America to support themselves through business and employment while deployed globally on mission. This is not entirely new for Avant and certainly not for the world of global missions. Nonetheless, for Latin America there is still a dearth of concrete opportunities for Latinos to embrace in their journey to the nations. This endeavor will include networking with those already engaging in business as mission and marketplace opportunities among the nations. The strategic path is still seminal but includes developing a team of businesspeople in Latin America to move this initiative forward.

Finally, there is an opportunity to influence the seminary in Honduras that was founded by my father and is part of the Avant-related association of churches there. There have been some germinal discussions about offering some the mentioned seminars and courses through the seminary either online, as an in-person module or even in the form of retreats for professionals and pastors in country once the pandemic allows such gatherings.

In conclusion, the opportunities for application are bountiful for local churches, theological institutions, mission entities and Avant Ministries. My deep yearning is for this to move far beyond the computer screen, the covers of a bound thesis-project, and the heart and mind of the author to notably impact the missional life of churches in Latin America and beyond.

Soli Deo Gloria.

APPENDIX A

FIELD SURVEY

Field Survey in English

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. It is only for people over 18 years of age. It is part of research to better understand how believers in Christ think. All of the information that you provide in this survey will be completely anonymous and confidential. Responding to this questionnaire indicates your consent to participate in this research project.

Please do not consult your answers with anyone because we are looking for your personal opinion. There are no wrong answers.

1. How old are you?
   - 18 to 24
   - 25 to 34
   - 35 to 44
   - 45 to 54
   - 55 to 64
   - Over 65

2. What is your marital status?
   - Single
   - Married
   - Widowed
   - Separated
   - Divorced
   - Other (specify) _____

3. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

4. Which level of education did you finish?
   - None
   - Elementary school
   - Middle school
   - Secondary school
   - University
   - Master's degree
   - Doctorate
   - Other (specify) _____

5. Which level of education did your mother finish?
    - None
    - Elementary school
    - Middle school
    - Secondary school
    - University
    - Master's degree
    - Doctorate
    - Other (specify) _____

6. Which level of education did your father finish?
    - None
    - Elementary school
    - Middle school
    - Secondary school
    - University
    - Master's degree
    - Doctorate
    - Other (specify) _____

7. In which of the following sectors do you work?
    - Agriculture
    - Arts
    - Science
    - Construction
    - Education
    - Government
    - Home
    - Information technology
    - Law
    - Environment
    - Communication
    - Christian vocational ministry
    - Business
    - Non-profit
    - Health
    - Transportation
    - Tourism
    - Other (specify) _____

8. Have you had any formal Bible training?
    - None
    - Partial Bible institute studies
    - Bible institute graduate
    - Partial seminary studies
    - Seminary graduate
    - Other (specify) _____

9. What is your employment status?
    - Part time
    - Full time
    - Student
    - Retired
    - Unemployed

10. Of which church are you a member?
    - Iglesia Fraternidad Cristiana Choluteca
    - Iglesia Fuente de Luz Choluteca
    - Iglesia Hermón Choluteca
    - Iglesia Manantiales Choluteca
    - Iglesia Betel Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Dios es Amor Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Ebenezer Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Emanuel Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Dios es Amor Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Dios Nuestra Fortaleza Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Ebenezer Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia ED Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Renacer Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Tabernáculo Evangélico Tegucigalpa
    - Other (specify) _____

11. For how many years have you been a believer in Jesus Christ?
    - I am not yet
    - I am not sure
    - 0 to 2 years
    - 3 to 5 years
    - 6 to 10 years
    - 11 to 20 years
    - 21 to 30 years
    - More than 30 years

12. How many generations of believers are there in your family?
    - I am the first generation
    - At least one of my parents is/was a believer
    - At least one of my grandparents is/was a believer
    - I am not sure

For the following activities and professions, please select the response that best represents your opinion. "Spiritual" is to be understood to mean something that is of interest to God or serves His purposes. "Secular" is to be understood to mean something that is not of much interest to God or does not serve His purposes as it is of the word.

ACTIVITIES

13. In your opinion are the following activities secular or spiritual? You can choose between "very secular," "secular," "neutral," "spiritual," or "Very spiritual."

Activity	**Very secular**	**Secular**	**Neutral**	**Spiritual**	**Very spiritual**
Play sports					
Treat a wound					
Paint a landscape					
Wash dishes					
Shop					
Go to a popular music concert					
Give alms					
Cultivate a garden					
Give advice					
Eat					

JOBS OR PROFESSIONS

14. In your opinion are the following jobs or professions secular or spiritual? You can choose between "very secular," "secular," "neutral," "spiritual," or "Very spiritual"?

Professions	**Very secular**	**Secular**	**Neutral**	**Spiritual**	**Very spiritual**
Lawyer					
Bricklayer					
Homemaker					
Artist					
Nurse					
Professional soccer player					
Missionary					
Businessman					
Pastor					
Trafficker					

PLACES

This section should be answered considering the place itself, not who is present.

15. In your opinion are the following place secular or spiritual? You can choose between "very secular," "secular," "neutral," "spiritual," or "Very spiritual"?

Places	**Very secular**	**Secular**	**Neutral**	**Spiritual**	**Very spiritual**
A public school					
A market					
The Basilica of Suyapa					
A cornfield					
A clinic					
An evangelical school					
A house					
A soccer field					
A mechanic shop					
A church building					
A real estate office					
A biblical seminary					

EVANGELISM

16. In your opinion, how important are the following activities for evangelism? For each of the following activities or actions, indicate the importance that it has in evangelizing non-believers. You can select "not important", "of little importance", neutral," "important," or "very important."

Evangelism Activities	**Not important**	**Of little importance**	**Neutral**	**Important**	**Very important**
Share the plan of salvation					
Help a neighbor with a home repair					
Not yell at the referee					
Hand out gospel tracts					
Be a part of social and civil activities in the community					
Not cheat on exams					
Ask questions of an unbeliever in order to get to know them better					
Share my testimony					
Not lie					
Help in the development of the community					

17. In your opinion, which of the following people can be considered servants of God?

Professions or jobs	**Yes**	**No**	**I am not sure**
A Christian actor			
A Christian ballerina			
A Christian cook			
A Christian professional athlete			
A Christian director of a children's food program			
A Christian plumber			
A Christian businessman			
A Christian teacher at a public school			
A Christian medical doctor			
A missionary			
A Christian policeman			
A Christian politician			
A Christian professor			

18. If you answered “I am not sure” to Question 17, please explain why you answered that way. _____

19. Please indicate if, in your opinion, the following activities are a service or ministry to God on the part of a committed believer:

Activities	**Totally disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Agree**	**Totally agree**
Go on vacation					
Help a neighbor					
Write a romantic poem					
Clean the yard					
Do errands					
Go to the stadium					
Give away food					
Teach a Bible class					
Harvest beans					
Listen to a friend					

20. For you, what makes a job or an activity secular? _____

21. In your opinion, what makes a profession be a ministry? _____

22. Imagine a young person committed to serving God who is deciding if he should go to study a career at university (like law, engineering, medicine or journalism) or go to bible school. What counsel would you give them?_____

23. In light of this questionnaire, do you have any additional comments? _____

Thank you for your participation.

Field Survey in Spanish

Gracias por tomar el tiempo de participar en esta encuesta. Es sólo para personas mayores de 18 años. Es parte de una investigación para entender mejor la forma de pensar de creyentes en Cristo. Toda la información que provea será completamente anónima y completamente confidencialidad. Al llenar esta encuesta está dando su consentimiento de participar en este proyecto de investigación.

Favor de no consultar con nadie su respuesta, pues buscamos solo su opinión personal.

1. ¿Cuántos años tiene?
   - 18 a 24 años
   - 25 a 34 años
   - 35 a 44 años
   - 45 a 54 años
   - 55 a 64 años
   - 65 años o más

2. ¿Cuál es su estado civil?
   - Soltero/a
   - Casado/a
   - Viudo/a
   - Separado/a
   - Divorciado/a
   - Otro (especifique) _____

3. ¿Cuál es su sexo?
   - Femenino
   - Masculino

4. ¿Qué nivel de educación ha terminado?
   - Ninguno
   - Primaria
   - Plan básico
   - Secundaria
   - Licenciatura
   - Maestría
   - Doctorado
   - Otro (especifique) _____

5. ¿Qué nivel de educación logró su madre?
   - Ninguno
   - Primaria
   - Plan básico
   - Secundaria
   - Licenciatura
   - Maestría
   - Doctorado
   - Otro (especifique) _____

6. ¿Qué nivel de educación logró su padre?
   - Ninguno
   - Primaria
   - Plan básico
   - Secundaria
   - Licenciatura
   - Maestría
   - Doctorado
   - Otro (especifique) _____

7. ¿En cuál o cuáles de los siguientes sectores trabaja usted?
   - Agricultura
   - Artes
   - Ciencias
   - Construcción
   - Educación
   - Gobierno
   - El hogar
   - Informática
   - Leyes
   - Medio ambiente
   - Medios de comunicación
   - Ministerio cristiano vocacional
   - Negocios
   - ONG
   - Salud
   - Transporte
   - Turismo (restaurante, hotel, etc.)
   - Otro (especifique) _____

8. ¿Tiene usted estudios bíblicos formales?
    - Ninguno
    - Estudios parciales de instituto bíblico
    - Graduado de instituto bíblico
    - Estudios parciales de seminario
    - Graduado de seminario
    - Otro (especifique) _____

9. ¿Cuál es su estado laboral?
    - Empleo de medio tiempo
    - Empleo de tiempo completo
    - Estudiante
    - Jubilado
    - Sin empleo

10. ¿De cuál iglesia es miembro?
    - Iglesia Fraternidad Cristiana Choluteca
    - Iglesia Fuente de Luz Choluteca
    - Iglesia Hermón Choluteca
    - Iglesia Manantiales Choluteca
    - Iglesia Betel Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Dios es Amor Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Ebenezer Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Emanuel Siguatepeque
    - Iglesia Dios es Amor Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Dios Nuestra Fortaleza Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Ebenezer Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia ED Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Renacer Tegucigalpa
    - Iglesia Tabernáculo Evangélico Tegucigalpa
    - Otro (especifique) _____

11. ¿Cuántos años tiene de ser creyente en Cristo Jesús?
    - Aún no lo soy
    - No estoy seguro
    - 0 a 2 años
    - 3 a 5 años
    - 6 a 10 años
    - 11 a 20 años
    - 21 a 30 años
    - Más de 30 años

12. ¿Cuántas generaciones de creyentes hay en su familia?
    - Soy la primera generación
    - Por lo menos uno de mis padres es/era creyentes
    - Por lo menos uno de mis abuelos es/era creyentes
    - No estoy seguro

Para las siguientes actividades y profesiones, favor de seleccionar la respuesta que más representa su opinión. Por "espiritual" se entiende que es algo que es de interés para Dios o que sirva sus propósitos. Por "secular" se entiende algo que no le interesa mucho a Dios o no sirve sus propósitos, pues es del mundo.

ACTIVIDADES

13. En su opinión ¿son las siguientes actividades seculares o espirituales? Debe de seleccionar entre "muy secular", "secular", "neutral", "espiritual", o "muy espiritual".

Actividad	**Muy secular**	**Secular**	**Neutral**	**Espiritual**	**Muy espiritual**
Jugar un partido					
Curar una herida					
Pintar un paisaje					
Lavar la losa					
Salir de compras					
Ir a un concierto de música popular					
Dar una limosna					
Cultivar una huerta					
Dar un consejo					
Comer					

TRABAJOS O PROFESIONES

14. En su opinión ¿son las siguientes trabajos o profesiones seculares o espirituales? Debe de seleccionar entre "muy secular", "secular", "neutral", "espiritual", o "muy espiritual".

Profesiones	**Muy secular**	**Secular**	**Neutral**	**Espiritual**	**Muy espiritual**
Abogado					
Albañil					
Ama de casa					
Artista					
Enfermera					
Futbolista profesional					
Misionero					
Negociante					
Pastor					
Traficante					

LUGARES

Debe contestar esta sección pensando en el lugar en sí, no quienes están allí.

15. En su opinión ¿son las siguientes actividades seculares o espirituales? Debe de seleccionar entre “muy secular”, “secular”, “neutral”, “espiritual”, o “muy espiritual”.

Lugares	**Muy secular**	**Secular**	**Neutral**	**Espiritual**	**Muy espiritual**
Una escuela pública					
Un mercado					
La Basílica de Suyapa					
Una milpa					
Una clínica					
Una escuela evangélica					
Una casa					
Una cancha de futbol					
Un taller de mecánica					
Un edificio de la iglesia					
Una oficina de bienes raíces					
Un seminario bíblico					

EVANGELISMO

16. En su opinión ¿qué tan importantes son las siguientes actividades para el evangelismo? You can select “not important”, “of little importance”, neutral,” “important,” or “very important.”

Actividades de Evangelismo	**No importante**	**Poco importante**	**Neutral**	**Importante**	**Muy importante**
Compartir el plan de la salvación					
Ayudar al vecino con una reparación en su casa					
No gritarle al arbitro					
Repartir tratados					
Ser parte de las actividades sociales o cívicas de la comunidad					
No copiar en los exámenes					
Hacerle preguntas al no cristiano para conocerle mejor					
Compartir mi testimonio					
No mentir					
Ayudar con el desarrollo de la comunidad					

17. En su opinión ¿quiénes de las siguientes personas se pueden considerar siervos/as de Dios?

Profesiones o trabajos	**Sí**	**No**	**No estoy seguro**
Un actor de teatro creyente			
Una bailarina creyente			
Un cocinero creyente			
Un deportista profesional creyente			
Una directora creyente de un comedor infantil			
Un fontanero creyente			
Un hombre de negocios creyente			
Una maestra de escuela pública creyente			
Un médico creyente			
Un creyente			
Un misionero			
Un policía creyente			
Un político creyente			
Un profesor de seminario			

18. Si contestó “no estoy seguro” a la pregunta 17, favor de explicar porqué contestó así.

_____

19. Favor de indicar si, en su opinión, las siguientes actividades son un servicio o ministerio para Dios de parte del creyente comprometido:

Actividades	**Totalmente en desacuerdo**	**En desacuerdo**	**Ni de acuerdo, ni en desacuerdo**	**De acuerdo**	**Totalmente de acuerdo**
Ir de vacaciones					
Ayudar a un vecino					
Escribir un poema romántico					
Limpiar el patio					
Hacer mandados					
Ir al estadio					
Regalar comida					
Enseñar una clase de Biblia					
Cosechar frijoles					
Escuchar a un amigo					

20. Para usted ¿Qué hace que un trabajo o una actividad sea secular? _____

21. En su opinión ¿qué es lo que hace que una profesión sea un misionero? _____
_____

22. Imagínese que un joven comprometido con servir al Señor está decidiendo si debe estudiar una carrera universitaria (como derecho, ingeniería, medicina o periodismo) o ir al seminario bíblico ¿qué consejo le daría? _____

23. A la luz de este cuestionario ¿tiene algún comentario adicional? _____

Gracias por su participación.

APPENDIX B

THE DUALISM SCORE AND DUALISM INDEX CALCULATIONS

Dualism Score Formulas

Question 13

This data collection point considered activities of a believer. The assumption was that a believer in Jesus is indwelled with the Spirit of God, so all that they do is spiritual. Therefore, each answer of "very secular" or "secular" received two points, while "neutral" counted one point. Additionally, any differentiation between "spiritual" and "very spiritual" was an indication that the respondent believed that there exist levels of spiritual activity, an indication of dualism. Therefore, if there was a variance between the number of answers to "spiritual" and "very spiritual," the lower of the two numbers was added to the score. There were 10 activities listed, so the total possible score was twenty and the lowest zero.

Question 14

Ten jobs were listed in this inquiry. However, because "trafficker" is by nature sinful, it was not included in the DI calculation. The assumption was that all jobs and professions not inherently sinful are spiritual for the believer and are to be engaged in response to God's calling and for His purposes. The expected answer for a dualist was that seven of the professions were "secular" or "very secular" while two, pastor and missionary, were "spiritual" or "very spiritual." For this question with nine calculatable options, the highest possible score was eighteen. Therefore, a seven/two split earned a score of 18 for very high dualism. Two points were subtracted for each answer of "spiritual" or "very spiritual" above the two expected, while one

point was subtracted for every "neutral." In the case of respondents with no answers of "neutral," "secular" or "very secular," this was an indication of little or no dualism, so the starting point was zero instead of eighteen. If, however, a participant indicated some jobs as "spiritual" while others as "very spiritual," this was still an indication of some dichotomy in their view of professions. Therefore, the lesser value of the two was added to zero. For example, if there were four "spiritual" and six "very spiritual," four points were added. Only if all the answers were in the same column, whether "spiritual" or "very spiritual," was a score of zero given as there was no sign of a divide.

Question 15

This question pertained to places with twelve different ones mentioned. A score of zero (no dualism) to 24 (very high dualism) was given to each respondent. The assumption was that places are inherently neutral, and man determines to use them or not for the glory of God. It could also be assumed that some might use the logic that God is omnipresent, and, therefore, all places are spiritual because He is there. Moreover, some may have assumed that the Basilica of Suyapa is used for idol worship and is thus a place of the spiritual forces of darkness. Therefore, it could be reasoned that someone with no SSD could categorize the basilica as secular, meaning it is not of God but of this world system. With these assumptions in mind, a participant answering all as "neutral," all as "spiritual" or all as "very spiritual" was given a score of zero. If there were eleven in one of these columns and only one in "secular" or "very secular" (to allow for the basilica), there were also given a score of zero. If eight of the twelve answers were in a single column of the three mentioned, and only one "secular" or "very secular" (to allow for the basilica), zero was the starting point with two points given for each answer outside of the mode

column since they were stating that there is a difference in the sacredness of these places. However, if there were more than one in the secular columns, that was evidence of dualism, and the starting point became twenty-four and the mode of the other columns was deducted. If there were none on the secular side yet a spread among the other three, zero was the starting point with two points added for the answers not in the mode.

Question 16

This data point was on evangelism and attempted to relate dualism to the mission of the Church. The assumption was that all that a believer is, does, and says are a part of communicating Christ to the world. A dualist would see evangelism as only being the communication of words, and then only when proclaiming or explaining the gospel of salvation. In this case, all of the activities on the list are assumed to be part of communicating Christ. However, in attempting to score the question and take into consideration variances of answers, it was determined that there was too much ambiguity in the answers to be able to clearly determine how a person with or without SSD would respond to be able to have an objective standard of scoring. A person without dualism could still consider some of these activities as more or less important in communicating Christ. So, while the data was usable for detecting dualism as explained in Chapter 5, in the end, because of this lack of clarity, this question was not taken into consideration for the DI score.

Question 17

The inquiry asked which occupations of believers should be considered servants of God with of twelve options given to evaluate. The assumption is that all believers are His servants. A

person with a clearly split view of life would see only pastors, missionaries, and others in "full-time ministry" as servants of God. For this question there were very few participants in middle ground. The most common scores were zero on one side and ten or twelve on the other. Therefore, only twelve points were given, not twenty-four, in order to not give too much value to a question with little middle ground. Any answer of "yes" received zero points while answers of "no" and "not sure" received one point each.

Question 19

This final quantitative question of the five used to establish for the DI score also had the most complex scoring in order to fairly account for dualism in the answers. There were ten activities that had to be categorized giving a possible score of zero to twenty. The assumption was that everything a committed believer does is unto the Lord, and, therefore, a service or ministry to Him. One with a bifurcated view would see only church-related activities as ministry to God. Because some of the activities listed are not clearly sacred or secular for a person with dualism, the scoring was adjusted accordingly. For this explanation, the left side of the scale ("totally disagree" and "disagree") is referred to as the secular side, while ("agree" and "totally agree") is called the spiritual side. The "do not agree nor disagree" is called neutral.

For this calculation the two sides, secular and sacred, were compared. Scores showing a clear secular/sacred divide are those with a five/five, four/six or six/four split and no neutrals as well as any with six or more on the secular side. Any of these results were given an initial score of twenty. For these for every sacred side total over five, two points were subtracted for each one above five (minus two for a six, minus four for seven, etc.). For every secular side total of less than five, two points were subtracted for each one under five (minus two for a total of four

seculars, minus four for a total of three seculars, etc.). If the majority of answers were on the secular side or the sides are equal with some neutrals, one point was subtracted from twenty for each neutral answer. If most answers were on the sacred side with some neutrals, one point was added for each neutral. If all the answers were on the sacred side, the starting score was zero, and the value of the lower number between "agree" and "totally agree" was added as some dualism was present. If most answers were neutral with no secular, one point was added for each neutral and two for each spiritual, as these would most likely be missionary and seminary professor for someone with dualism. Finally, for a respondent with answers in all five categories, the score was of twenty minus the number of neutrals.

Dualism Index Calculations

The scale for converting the DS into a DI score was in most cases based on a possible total score of 92, the highest possible DS as shown in Table 9. However, there were forty-four respondents that did not answer all the questions. For these the scale for conversion was adjusted according to the total possible score for that individual. The total score possible for these forty-four people along with the number of participants for each possible maximum score was as follows:

Possible Maximum Score	Participants
82	1
74	5
72	12
70	3
62	11
52	1
38	11

Therefore, seven scales were created, one for each of these total possible scores. Each category from zero to five had approximately one-sixth of the total dualism score. In this way each participant was given a dualism index of zero to five with the values corresponding to those in Table 9.

APPENDIX C

WHY IGLESIA BETEL HAS A SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER DUALISM INDEX SCORE

As set forth in this thesis-project, analysis of the data from the survey generates significant statistical proof that members of Bethel Church in Siguatepeque had a lower prevalence of dualism than respondents from the other thirteen churches. What is unique about Bethel? What have they done that has caused their members to have a significantly lower DI score? Are there any identifiable characteristics that could serve other churches seeking to irradicate a dualistic worldview?

Although this variance is clear from the data, it is not feasible to determine causality with the information produced by the research. Therefore, interviews were conducted with three of the leaders of the congregation in order to uncover underlying conditions that distinguish this local body from others in the study. Furthermore, a recent article on Bethel's response to the COVID-19 pandemic that was written by Dr. Enrique Martínez, coordinator of the pastoral team, was assessed in search of indications. Lastly, my personal experience of being a member of this body since 1971, one of the pastors for seven years from 1986 to 1992 and one of their missionaries since then allows for insiderness.[1] These inquiries disclosed four primary probable causes of a lower DI score for Bethel, namely, its leadership model, biblical teaching, wholistic outreach and global interface.

1. The University of Southern California defines "insiderness" as "a concept in qualitative research that refers to the degree to which a researcher has access to and an understanding of persons, places, or things within a group or community based on being a member of that group or community." "Glossary of Research Terms," accessed September 6, 2021, https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/researchglossary.

Leadership Model

Since 1986, Bethel has mostly practiced a shared model of leadership. A first step was to have a second full-time pastor beginning with that year. The governance paradigm at the time was that the pastors, elders, deacons and deaconesses formed a *concilio* or council that was elected by the members and met together to lead the church under the leadership of a pastor (often salaried). Even now this is the conventional pattern of local organization in the denomination. During that year, a biblical study of New Testament leadership was undertaken over several weeks. Each teaching instance included ample discussion time in small groups about the biblical content, including the question, "What changes can we make at Bethel in order to be more in line with Scripture?" The result was that the congregation made excellent suggestions which the leadership adopted. The pastor-elders began leading as a pastoral team while the deacons and deaconesses attended to the treasury, social services (seeking to apply Acts 6) as well as the building and grounds.

This shared approach put all the pastor-elders as a team possessing the authority in the church, not just the pastors on staff or one pastor with more authority. One of the pastor-elders is always the coordinator of the team, but that person does not have more authority or independence in decision-making. There was a ten-year gap in which an authoritative pastor was brought in that reverted the church in several ways to the former hierarchy. But, since 2011 there has been a cohesive group of pastor-elders. The coordinator has not been on salary from the church. One of the current pastor-elders, Luis Rodríquez, observed that there has been "a struggle in our church overcome the concept of one 'holy pastor' and those accompanying him."[2] He continued, "Those around us are always trying to identify who is or should be the 'holy

2. Personal interview with Luis Beltrán Rodriquez, August 30, 2021.

pastor' instead the pastoral team. Sometimes we limp along, but we move forward (with our model)."[3]

Besides shared authority and responsibility, the leadership model is characterized by a shared pulpit, facilitative leadership and openness to change. Since 1987 all the pastor-elders have shared in the teaching, not just the full-time pastor when there has been one. This has been a very visible way of lowering the profile of one leader and establishing the authority of pastor-elders, some of whom have worked in the fields of medicine, banking, microbiology and other professions. This has assisted in members understanding that ministry is not just what the "professional pastors" do. Dr. Martínez refers to this shared teaching as part of "low-profile leadership," which seeks to serve under the radar as much as possible and avoid the predominance of one leader over the others.[4]

Another attribute of this model is that it is facilitative leadership.[5] It seeks to involve others, to push ministry initiatives to the members and seek ownership of ministry by all. A final element is closely related, which is openness to change. This was manifest since the tenure of pastor Roberto Munguía in the early 1980s. He encouraged change and always allowed Scripture to confront tradition.[6] This overlaps with the next characteristic of the church, which is solid teaching of the Word of God.

3. Personal interview with Luis Rodriquez, August 30, 2021.

4. Personal interview with Enrique and Norma Martínez, August 28, 2021.

5. Personal interview with Enrique and Norma Martínez, August 28, 2021.

6. Personal interview with Enrique and Norma Martínez, August 28, 2021.

Biblical Teaching

Another hallmark of Bethel has been the consistent exposition of Scripture with an emphasis on application to and by all. Rodríquez categorized this as the fundamental stimulus in reducing the dualism incidence in the congregation stating, "I believe that the basis is the biblical teaching dating back to the [1980s], that sees the Christian life as one, not something divided. . . . We gave prominence to the Word of God over tradition."[7] The process of changing of tradition can indubitably be thorny, but persistence and consistency have made headway.

One key factor in teaching has been insisting in recent years that the church is not a building, but a people. It is not merely semantics; there is deep meaning attached to the biblical concept of the local church as the assembly of God's people in given location. "Terminology influences. We were strong in differentiating this" insisted pastor-elder Martínez.[8] Both leaders noted the accomplishment of changing the name on the building to "Auditorium of Bethel Church" to emphasize that the building is not a church, merely a place at the service of the mission of the God's people. One visible result of this emphasis is that, although the church has not gathered physically together since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, eighteen months on they are still united, connected and serving victims of both the pandemic and two hurricanes that slammed the country at the end of that year. There is a strong sense of community and of mission in this local body that binds them together even when limited to virtual meetings, electronic communication, occasional in-person, but small gatherings, and visits to those in need.[9]

---

7. Personal interview with Luis Rodriquez, August 30, 2021.

8. Personal interview with Enrique and Norma Martínez, August 28, 2021.

9. A full accounting of Bethel as a missional community during the pandemic is available in Enrique Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response to the Pandemic and Other Natural Disasters: A Case Study in

"Can the church minister outside the buildings that have erroneously come to be called 'churches'?" asks Martinez in his article. "Many churches," he continues in answer to his own question, "due to extreme dependence on their buildings, programs and services, have been unable to minister in the new reality of COVID-19. Meanwhile, the Lord has enabled other churches to offer rapid, creative responses."[10] Bethel Church is clearly one of the latter.

Wholistic Outreach

The third characteristic of Bethel Church that its leaders identified as contributing to lower-than-normal dualism is the missional outreach of this church body. Martinez explains,

> The church strives to maintain a flexible, refreshing ministry dynamic with solid biblical bases. It has been a pioneer in community and social involvement since 1981, when it founded a daycare program which later became the *Programa de Desarrollo Integral del Menor* (PRODIM-Betel; Program of Wholistic Childhood Development). This program's goal is to support at-risk children and their families, most of which are headed by single mothers. The program's positive effects in the community have been validated by measurable indicators over the years.[11]

For many years this program functioned in conjunction with Kindernothilfe (KNH), a non-profit organization based in Germany. It is important to note that when KNH pulled out of Latin America, the majority of their sixteen projects in the country did not survive. Bethel's did continue but not without struggle. The very fact of the program's sustained operation after losing all funding from Germany is proof of Bethel's ownership of both the program and the mission of God's people. As far as is known, only one other program in the country survived.[12] PRODIM

Honduras," *Journal of Latin American Theology: Christian Reflections from the Latino South* 16, no. 1 (January 2021): 149-63.

10. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 155.

11. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 152.

12. Norma de Martínez, text message, September 6, 2021.

today enjoys an excellent reputation in the community with the majority of funding coming from members of Bethel and grateful local citizens and businesses that see the results. Many of these at-risk children have gone on to be professionals, including one who became a member of the Honduran Congress.

Another aspect of Bethel's missional outreach has been its response in times of disaster. In the late nineteen eighties they took aid to a community on the north coast that was devastated by floods. However, later disaster response became more transformative and not merely assistance focused. After Hurricane Mitch in 1998, Bethel joined a coalition of churches in the on-going development of various communities that were devastated by the floods. Martínez explains that "the Evangelical Network of Ongoing Solidarity . . . offered holistic, long-term support to one community in particular. The support included crisis intervention for adults and children from an emotional and spiritual standpoint, medical attention, and construction work to rebuild homes."[13] During the current pandemic, Bethel has provided and coordinated the distribution of basic food and household items to hundreds of families that are suffering due to unemployment and sickness in their neighborhood and city as well as several hundred affected by Hurricanes Eta and Iota that slammed Central America in November 2020. As of the date of the publication of this research project, this outreach continues every three weeks, along with other forms of care, encouragement, and sharing of the Truth. Several individuals and families have come to faith in Christ through this ongoing involvement. Those who no longer need the assistant are now helping to provide for others.

Although there are other facets of Bethel's outreach, a final one to consider is their global ministry. Beginning in the mid-nineteen eighties, Bethel has interceded for and invested in global

13. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 153.

missions. In 1994 it was a founding member of Cooperation MAYA (Mission to Albania and Beyond). It began as a collaboration of three local churches, one each in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador to send a team to recently opened Albania. Later a fourth local church from El Salvador was aggregated to the coalition. Bethel was the initiator that invited the other churches, who together forged this ambitious project from Central America to the world. Bethel sent one of their fulltime pastors, that is me and my family, to Albania to open the way and then lead the team. For the thirteen years we were in Albania, they supported us at almost the same level that was my salary for the years I was pastor, much less than needed to live in Albania, but extremely sacrificial and generous on the part of the sending church. They took the initiative in approaching other churches to secure the remainder of the support that we needed. Today they support through prayer, communication and funding missionaries from Central America that serve in Albania, Macedonia, Mali, Spain and the Philippines.

Global Interface

Because of Bethel's vision, initiative and broad involvement within and beyond the walls of their buildings, they have partnered with an impressive list of organizations at a local, national and international level. The church was founded in 1958 through the efforts of personnel from Missionary Aviation Fellowship and the Hospital Evangélico. Personnel from the latter have continued to be a part of the church until the present. Other partner organizations are Camino Global (now Avant Ministries), KNH, Tearfund, Scripture Union, Hilfe Für Brüder, Red del Camino, the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, various seminaries, the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, Langham Partnership and many others.[14] Martinez states:

14. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 153-54.

> The church has enjoyed deeply enriching interactions with a wide range of organizations, and these opportunities to interface with other entities have effectively constituted a training school of formation in the meaning and practice of mission from a broader perspective (more "integral" or "holistic") . . . Over the years of being a part of a broad range of service and mission networks, the church has formed strong bonds of friendship with people and churches from abroad who have visited us, worked alongside us, and helped fund Iglesia Betel's projects. When Iglesia Betel faces difficult times, these partners have responded with great willingness and love.[15]

Because of this global interface, the pastor-elder continues, "Iglesia Betel has gradually become a less structured but more functional, organic church that seeks to obey the great commission (Mt 28:18-20) and the greatest commandment (Mt 22:36-40)."[16]

In summarizing the reasons for Bethel's missional presence in their community and far beyond, Martínez concludes:

> for the past few years Iglesia Betel has been growing toward the following principles: 1) the church is a community of faith (the people) and not a building or programs; 2) discipleship is essential and leads to a lifestyle of sharing the gospel; 3) the church's mission is broader than its geographic borders, and there are different local and global mission fields; 4) social service and involvement in the public sphere are part of the church's mission. Two of our guiding slogans—"mission is everyone's responsibility and is for everyone" and "the church is constantly undergoing renovation"—sum up our efforts to promote greater involvement from the congregation and their subsequent training and formation in mission.[17]

These principles clearly mark a departure from the cleavage in the vision of life found in other congregations in this research. While Bethel's leadership model, biblical teaching, wholistic outreach and global interface may not exhaust all of the possible explanations for the statistical differentiation of this community, it certainly sheds light on how God has worked to break down the causes of SSD. Any effort to change worldview in a community of faith would do well to take these factors into consideration.

---

15. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 153-54.

16. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 154.

17. Martínez Reina, "The Local Church's Response," 156.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, James. "La Formación Espiritual: Fundamento Olvidado de la Misión." Unpublished Lausanne paper, 2010.

Allen, Scott D. *Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide: A Call to Wholistic Life and Ministry*. Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2011.

Banco Mundial. "Desempleo Total (% de la población activa total) (estimación modelada OIT) – Honduras." https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=HN.

Banks, Robert, and R. Paul Stevens. *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Barclay, William. *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians and Thessalonians*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Beckett, John D. *Loving Monday: Succeeding in Business without Selling Your Soul*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006.

Berger, Peter. *Facing Up to Modernity: Excursions in Society, Politics, and Religion*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977.

Bock, Darrell. *Luke: The NIV Application Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998. http://web.a.ebscohost.com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzE1MjQ4MjhfX0FO0?sid=f4989819-bc40-42d8-b042-e2e8d6ee075d@sdc-v-sessmgr01&vid=0&format=EK&lpid=COMM&rid=0.

Borthwick, Paul. *Western Christians in Global Missions: What's the Role of the North American Church?* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.

Bratt, James. "I'm Sick of 'Every Square Inch.'" *Reformed Journal*, October 12, 2013. https://blog.reformedjournal.com/2013/10/12/why-im-sick-of-every-square-inch/.

Castro-Martín, Teresa, and Antía Domínguez-Rodríguez. "Consensual Unions in Central America: Historical Continuities and New Emerging Patterns." In *Cohabitation and Marriage in the Americas: Geo-historical Legacies and New Trends*, edited by. Albert Esteve and Ron Lesthaeghe. New York, NY: Springer International Publishing, 2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31442-6_6.

Christian History Institute. "Christian History: The Roots and Branches of Pietism." https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/roots-and-branches-of-pietism

Constantineanu, Corneliu. “Public Theology.” Plenary lecture presented at the ICETE Conference, Panama City, Panama, November 1, 2018. https://icete.info/equipping/consultations/c18-panama/.

Country Security Report. “Honduras 2020 Crime and Safety Report.” March 31, 2020. https://www.osac.gov/Country/Honduras/Content/Detail/Report/14441101-11fd-487c-9d15-18553e50609c.

Crouch, Andy. *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008.

Deiros, Pablo A. *El mundo religioso latinoamericano*. El Paso, TX: Editorial Mundo Hispano, 2017.

Eldred, Ken. *God Is at Work: Transforming People and Nations through Business*. Montrose, CO: Manna Ventures, 2009.

Escobar, Samuel. *In Search of Christ in Latin America: From Colonial Image to Liberating Savior*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2019.

Eusebius of Caesarea. *Demonstration of the Gospel (Demostratio Evangelica)*. http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/eusebius_de_03_book1.htm.

Fleming, Dean. *Recovering the Full Mission of God: A Biblical Perspective on Being, Doing, and Telling*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013.

Forster, Greg. *Theology That Works: Making Disciples Who Practice Fruitful Work and Economic Wisdom in Modern America*. Deerfield, IL: The Oikonomia Network, n.d.

France, R. T. *Matthew*. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985.

Gehman, James A. “Definición de la misión integral e implicaciones para la hermenéutica bíblica.” *Kairós* 45 (julio-diciembre 2009): 109-34.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *Historia del Pensamiento Cristiano*. Viladecavalls, Spain: Editorial CLIE, 2010.

———, and Ondina E. Gonzalez. *Christianity in Latin America: A History*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Greene, Mark. *The Great Divide*. London, UK: London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, 2010.

———, and Ian Shaw. “Overcoming the Sacred/Secular Divide through Theological Education.” Plenary lecture presented at the ICETE Conference, Panama City, Panama, November 1,

2018. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wh9-IDEgE46Ol01f49VKSjxLxZnbf0NH/view?ts=5c000222.

Grudem, Wayne. *Business for the Glory of God: The Bible's Teaching on the Moral Goodness of Business*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003.

Guinness, Os. *The American Hour: A Time of Reckoning and the Once and Future Role of Faith*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1993.

Ham, Andres. "Social and Economic Impact of the COVID-19 and Policy Options in Honduras." UNDP LAC C19 PDS No.4. April 9, 2020. School of Government, Universidad de los Andes. March 2020.

Hesselgrave, David J. "Redefining Holism." Evangelism and Missions Information Service, July 1999. https://missionexus.org/redefining-holism/.

Holland, Clifton L. "An Historical Profile of Religion in Honduras." Revised July 20, 2001. http://www.prolades.com/cra/regions/cam/hon/honduras.html.

Horton, Michael S. *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011.

HRN. "Las madres solteras representan el 46% de la población de mujeres en Honduras." May 10, 2020. https://www.radiohrn.hn/las-madres-solteras-representan-el-46-de-la-poblacion-de-mujeres-en-honduras.

Human Rights Watch. "Honduras: Events of 2020." https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2021/country-chapters/honduras.

Humanitarian Data Exchange. "Honduras—Subnational Population Statistics." https://data.humdata.org/dataset/6203b8df-ef66-4e55-baba-6d8547438a77.

Joshua Project. "People Groups: Honduras." https://joshuaproject.net/countries/HO.

Keller, Timothy. *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2012.

Knoema. "Education Statistics." https://knoema.com/WBEDS2017Jun/education-statistics?tsId=1491900.

Levinson, Martin H. "Science Versus Religion: A False Dichotomy?" *ETC: A Review of General Semantics* 63, no. 4 (October 2006): 422-29.

Lim, Clive, and Paul Stephens. *Money Matters: Faith, Life, and Wealth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2021.

Livingston, Douglas. “Una Historia Interpretativa de las Iglesias Evangélicas Centroamericanas en Honduras, 1896-1945.” Master’s thesis, Seminario Teológico Centroamericano, Guatemala, 1985.

Luther, Martin. “An Appeal to the Working Class of German Nationality as to the Amelioration of the State of Christendom, 1520.” In *Selected Writings of Martin Luther*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007.

MacArthur, John. “The Believer’s Supreme Act of Worship.” September 9, 1984. https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/45-89.

MacKay, John A. *The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001.

Miller, Darrow. *Discipling Nations: The Power of Truth to Transform Cultures*. 3rd ed. Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2018.

———. *LifeWork: A Biblical Theology for What You Do Every Day*. Seattle, WA: YWAM Publishing, 2009.

Moffit, Bob. “What’s in a Name: Wholism vs. Holism.” Darrow Miller and Friends. October 6, 2011. http://darrowmillerandfriends.com/2011/10/06/whats-in-a-name-wholism-vs-holism/.

Moises, Alfonso. “Religion in Mesoamerica.” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 2, no. 8, Special Issue (April 2012): 20-33. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272740466_Religion_in_Mesoamerica.

Mordomo, Joao. “What Does the Sacred-Secular Divide Look Like Around the World?” Business As Mission. April 22, 2015. https://businessasmission.com/divide-around-the-world/.

Mortenson, Terry. “Noah’s Flood: A Historical, Global Catastrophe.” Answers in Genesis. Posted October 10, 2020. https://answersingenesis.org/noahs-flood/.

Nelson, Tom. *Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011.

Office of International Freedom. “2019 International Report on Religious Freedom: Honduras.” https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/honduras/.

Operation World. “Evangelical Population.” https://www.operationworld.org/hidden/evangelical-population.

Overman, Christian. *God’s Pleasure at Work: Bridging the Sacred-Secular Divide*. Bellevue, WA: Ablaze Publications, 2009.

Pearcey, Nancy. *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008.

Peel, Bill, and Walt Larimore. *Workplace Grace: Becoming a Spiritual Influence at Work*. Longview, TX: LeTourneau Press, 2014.

Pew Research. *The Gender Gap in Religion Around the World, Appendix B*. https://www.pewforum.org/2016/03/22/the-gender-gap-in-religion-around-the-world/.

Pierce, Aaron. "Jesus and the Secular World." Online seminar presented by MissioNexus, April 30, 2019.

Pivaral, Hector "Guatemala, A Case Study: The Evangelical Church and the Influential Animistic Spirituality." In *Global Mission, Reflections and Case Studies in Contextualization for the Whole Church*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011.

Read Educational Trust. "The Benefits of Literacy." http://www.read.org.za/useful-info/benefits-of-literacy/.

Reconciled World. "Integrating Physical and Spiritual." Book 3 of the Transformational Framework series. https://frameworkfortransformation.org/wp-content/uploads/Integrating-Physical-Spiritual-booklet-2019.pdf.

Reju, Oladotun. "Theology of Work." Plenary lecture presented at the ICETE Conference, Reju Panama City, Panama. November 1, 2018. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hAf5BLiUtx2j4e1a5XMSfzOyO4PbRB4k/view?ts=5c000222.

Robinson, Bob. "Structure and Direction: A Better Paradigm for Cultural Engagement." *Reintegrate* (blog). *Patheos*, May 3, 2013. https://www.patheos.com/blogs/reintegrate/2013/05/03/structure-and-direction-better-paradigm-for-cultural-engagement/.

Ryan-Ranson, Helen. *Imagination, Emblems, and Expressions: Essays on Latin American, Caribbean and Continental Culture and Identity*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993.

Ryrie, Charles. *So Great Salvation*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1989.

Schaeffer, Francis. *The Age of Reason*. Leicester, England: University and Colleges Christian Fellowship, 1968.

———. *A Christian Manifesto*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1981.

Sherman, Doug, and William Hendricks. *Your Work Matters to God*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1987.

Sifontes, Francis Polo. *Historia de Guatemala: visión de conjunto de su desarrollo político-cultural*. Leon, Spain: Editorial Evergráficas, 1988.

Smith, Warren Cole, and John Stonestreet. *Restoring All Things: God's Audacious Plan to Change the World through Ordinary People*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2015.

Solzhenitsyn, Alexander. *The Gulag Archipelago, 1918–1956: An Experiment in Literary Investigation, III-IV*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1974. https://archive.org/details/gulagarchipelago00solzrich/page/n5/mode/2up.

Sproul, R. C. "What Does 'coram Deo' Mean." Ligonier Ministries. November 17, 2017. https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-does-coram-deo-mean/.

Stamatellos, Giannis. *Introduction to Presocratics: A Thematic Approach to Early Greek Philosophy with Key Readings*. Malden, MA: John Wiley and Sons, 2012.

Stevens, R. Paul. *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000.

Transparency International. "Corruption Perception Index 2020." https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl.

United Nations Development Program. "Honduras." *Human Development Report 2020*. http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/HND.

———. "The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene." *Human Development Report 2020*. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/HND.pdf.

Van Duzer, Jeff. *Why Business Matters to God (And What Still Needs to Be Fixed)*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010.

Veith, Gene Edward, Jr. *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2002.

Vidal Manzanares, César. *La Herencia del Cristianismo: Dos Milenios de Legado*. Tyler, TX: Editorial JUCUM, 2014.

———. *El Legado de la Reforma: Una Herencia para el Futuro*. Tyler, TX: Editorial JUCUM, 2016.

Whelchel, Hugh. *How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work*. McLean, VA: Institute for Faith, Work and Economics, 2012.

Willard, Dallas. *The Spirit of the Disciplines-Reissue: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1999.

Wilson, Gene. “Holistic Church Planting: Moving Beyond Polemics to Obedience.” *Evangelical Mission Quarterly* 50 (July 2014): 342-49.

Winter, Ralph. “The Future of Evangelical Missions.” Mission Frontiers, September – October 2007. https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/the-future-of-evangelicals-in-mission.

Wolters, Albert M. *Creation Regained: Biblical Basics for a Reformational Worldview*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005.

World Bank. “Honduras.” https://data.worldbank.org/country/honduras?view=chart.

———. “Urban Population (% of the Total Population) Honduras.” https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=HN.

———. “The World Bank in Honduras: Overview.” Last modified October 9, 2020. https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/honduras/overview.

World Population Review. “Murder Rate by Country 2021.” https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/murder-rate-by-country.

Wright, Christopher J. H. *The Mission of God’s People: A Biblical Theology of the Church’s Mission*. Biblical Theology for Life. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2010.

Zimmermann, Earl. “Beyond Secular and Sacred: An Anabaptist Model for Christian Social Ethics.” https://uwaterloo.ca/grebel/sites/ca.grebel/files/uploads/files/CGR-25-2-S2007-3.pdf.

VITA

Full name: Douglas Alan Livingston

Date and place of birth: February 19, 1960, in Dallas, Texas

Education: BA in Pastoral Theology, Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham, Alabama, 1982

MA in Theology, Seminario Teológico Centroamericano, Guatemala City, Guatemala, 1985

Years of D.Min. work: 2014–2021

Expected graduation: May 2022